This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

**Usage guidelines**

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

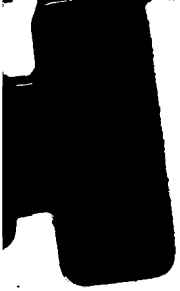
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

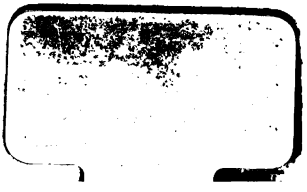
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

**About Google Book Search**

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`





XN51.52 [Cax]

Oxford University
ENGLISH FACULTY LIBRARY
Manor Road
Oxford

*This book should be returned on or before the latest date below:*

JAN 19[illegible]3

*Readers are asked to protect Library books from rain, etc. Any volumes which are lost, defaced with notes, or otherwise damaged, may have to be replaced by the Reader responsible.*

300151066M

# THE CAXTONS

## A FAMILY PICTURE

PRINTED BY WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS, EDINBURGH.

# THE CAXTONS

## A FAMILY PICTURE

BY

SIR E. BULWER LYTTON, BART.
AUTHOR OF "RIENZI," &C.

Every family is a history in itself, and even a poem to those who know how to search its pages.—LAMARTINE.

Di, probos mores docili juventæ
Di, senectuti placidæ quietem
Romulæ genti date remque prolemque
Et decus omne.
HORAT. *Carmen Sæculare.*

VOL. II.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCXLIX

# PART SEVENTH.

CONTINUED.

# THE CAXTONS.

## CHAPTER V.

### MY FATHER'S FIRST LOVE.

"I LOST my mother early; my father (a good man, but who was so indolent that he rarely stirred from his chair, and who often passed whole days without speaking, like an Indian dervish) left Roland and myself to educate ourselves much according to our own tastes. Roland shot, and hunted, and fished,—read all the poetry and books of chivalry to be found in my father's collection, which was rich in such matters, and made a great many copies of the old pedigree;—the only thing in which my father ever evinced much vital interest. Early in life I conceived a passion for graver studies, and by good luck I found a tutor in Mr Tibbets, who, but for his modesty, Kitty, would have rivalled Porson. He was a second

Budæus for industry, and, by the way, he said exactly the same thing that Budæus did, viz. 'that the only lost day in his life was that in which he was married; for on that day he had only had six hours for reading!' Under such a master I could not fail to be a scholar. I came from the university with such distinction as led me to look sanguinely on my career in the world.

"I returned to my father's quiet rectory to pause and consider what path I should take to fame. The rectory was just at the foot of the hill, on the brow of which were the ruins of the castle Roland has since purchased. And though I did not feel for the ruins the same romantic veneration as my dear brother, (for my day-dreams were more coloured by classic than feudal recollections,) I yet loved to climb the hill, book in hand, and build my castles in the air amidst the wrecks of that which time had shattered on the earth.

"One day, entering the old weed-grown court, I saw a lady, seated on my favourite spot, sketching the ruins. The lady was young — more beautiful than any woman I had yet seen, at least to my eyes. In a word, I was fascinated, and, as the trite phrase goes, 'spell-bound.' I seated myself at a little distance, and contemplated her without desiring to speak. By-and-by, from another part of the ruins,

which were then uninhabited, came a tall, imposing, elderly gentleman, with a benignant aspect; and a little dog. The dog ran up to me barking. This drew the attention of both lady and gentleman to me. The gentleman approached, called off the dog, and apologised with much politeness. Surveying me somewhat curiously, he then began to ask questions about the old place and the family it had belonged to, with the name and antecedents of which he was well acquainted. By degrees it came out that I was the descendant of that family, and the younger son of the humble rector who was now its representative. The gentleman then introduced himself to me as the Earl of Rainsforth, the principal proprietor in the neighbourhood, but who had so rarely visited the county during my childhood and earlier youth, that I had never before seen him. His only son, however, a young man of great promise, had been at the same college with me in my first year at the university. The young lord was a reading man and a scholar; and we had become slightly acquainted when he left for his travels.

"Now, on hearing my name, Lord Rainsforth took my hand cordially, and, leading me to his daughter, said, 'Think, Ellinor, how fortunate!—this is the Mr Caxton whom your brother so often spoke of.'

"In short, my dear Pisistratus, the ice was broken, the acquaintance made, and Lord Rainsforth, saying he was come to atone for his long absence from the county, and to reside at Compton the greater part of the year, pressed me to visit him. I did so. Lord Rainsforth's liking to me increased: I went there often."

My father paused, and seeing my mother had fixed her eyes upon him with a sort of mournful earnestness, and had pressed her hands very tightly together, he bent down and kissed her forehead.

"There is no cause, my child!" said he. It is the only time I ever heard him address my mother so parentally. But then I never heard him before so grave and solemn — not a quotation, too—it was incredible: it was not my father speaking, it was another man. "Yes, I went there often. Lord Rainsforth was a remarkable person. Shyness, that was wholly without pride, (which is rare,) and a love for quiet literary pursuits, had prevented his taking that personal part in public life for which he was richly qualified; but his reputation for sense and honour, and his personal popularity, had given him no inconsiderable influence even, I believe, in the formation of cabinets, and he had once been prevailed upon to fill a high diplomatic situation abroad, in which I have no doubt that he was as miserable as a

good man can be under any infliction. He was now pleased to retire from the world, and look at it through the loopholes of retreat. Lord Rainsforth had a great respect for talent, and a warm interest in such of the young as seemed to him to possess it. By talent, indeed, his family had risen, and were strikingly characterised. His ancestor, the first peer, had been a distinguished lawyer; his father had been celebrated for scientific attainments; his children, Ellinor and Lord Pendarvis, were highly accomplished. Thus the family identified themselves with the aristocracy of intellect, and seemed unconscious of their claims to the lower aristocracy of rank. You must bear this in mind throughout my story.

"Lady Ellinor shared her father's tastes and habits of thought—(she was not then an heiress.) Lord Rainsforth talked to me of my career. It was a time when the French Revolution had made statesmen look round with some anxiety to strengthen the existing order of things, by alliance with all in the rising generation who evinced such ability as might influence their contemporaries.

"University distinction is, or was formerly, among the popular passports to public life. By degrees Lord Rainsforth liked me so well, as to suggest to me a seat in the House of Commons. A member of Parliament might rise to anything, and Lord Rains-

forth had sufficient influence to effect my return. Dazzling prospect this to a young scholar fresh from Thucydides, and with Demosthenes fresh at his tongue's end. My dear boy, I was not then, you see, quite what I am now; in a word, I loved Ellinor Compton, and therefore I was ambitious. You know how ambitious she is still. But I could not mould my ambition to hers. I could not contemplate entering the senate of my country as a dependant on a party or a patron—as a man who must make his fortune there—as a man who, in every vote, must consider how much nearer he advanced himself to emolument. I was not even certain that Lord Rainsforth's views on politics were the same as mine would be. How could the politics of an experienced man of the world be those of an ardent young student? But had they been identical, I felt that I could not so creep into equality with a patron's daughter. No! I was ready to abandon my own more scholastic predilections—to strain every energy at the bar—to carve or force my own way to fortune—and, if I arrived at independence, then—what then? why, the right to speak of love, and aim at power. This was not the view of Ellinor Compton. The law seemed to her a tedious, needless drudgery: there was nothing in it to captivate her imagination. She listened to me with that charm which she yet retains, and by which

she seems to identify herself with those who speak to her. She would turn to me with a pleading look when her father dilated on the brilliant prospects of a parliamentary success; for he (not having gained it, yet having lived with those who had) overvalued it, and seemed ever to wish to enjoy it through some other. But when I, in turn, spoke of independence, of the bar, Ellinor's face grew overcast. The world —the world was with her, and the ambition of the world, which is always for power or effect! A part of the house lay exposed to the east wind. 'Plant half-way down the hill,' said I one day. 'Plant!' cried Lady Ellinor—'it will be twenty years before the trees grow up. No, my dear father, build a wall, and cover it with creepers!' That was an illustration of her whole character. She could not wait till trees had time to grow; a dead wall would be so much more quickly thrown up, and parasite creepers would give it a prettier effect. Nevertheless, she was a grand and noble creature. And I—in love! Not so discouraged as you may suppose; for Lord Rainsforth often hinted encouragement, which even I could scarcely misconstrue. Not caring for rank, and not wishing for fortune beyond competence for his daughter, he saw in me all he required,—a gentleman of ancient birth, and one in whom his own active mind could prosecute that kind of mental ambition which

overflowed in him, and yet had never had its vent. And Ellinor!—heaven forbid I should say she loved me,—but something made me think she could do so. Under these notions, suppressing all my hopes, I made a bold effort to master the influences round me, and to adopt that career I thought worthiest of us all. I went to London to read for the bar."

"The bar! is it possible?" cried I. My father smiled sadly.

"Everything seemed possible to me then. I read some months. I began to see my way even in that short time; began to comprehend what would be the difficulties before me, and to feel there was that within me which could master them. I took a holiday and returned to Cumberland. I found Roland there on my return. Always of a roving, adventurous temper, though he had not then entered the army, he had, for more than two years, been wandering over Great Britain and Ireland on foot. It was a young knight-errant whom I embraced, and who overwhelmed me with reproaches that I should be reading for the law. There had never been a lawyer in the family! It was about that time, I think, that I petrified him with the discovery of the printer! I knew not exactly wherefore, whether from jealousy, fear, foreboding—but it certainly *was* a pain that seized me—when I learned from Roland that he had

become intimate at Compton Hall. Roland and Lord Rainsforth had met at the house of a neighbouring gentleman, and Lord Rainsforth had welcomed his acquaintance, at first perhaps for my sake, afterwards for his own.

"I could not for the life of me," continued my father, "ask Roland if he admired Ellinor; but, when I found that he did not put that question to me, I trembled!

"We went to Compton together, speaking little by the way. We stayed there some days."

My father here thrust his hand into his waistcoat—all men have their little ways, which denote much; and when my father thrust his hand into his waistcoat, it was always a sign of some mental effort—he was going to prove, or to argue, to moralise, or to preach. Therefore, though I was listening before with all my ears, I believe I had, speaking magnetically and mesmerically, an extra pair of ears, a new sense supplied to me, when my father put his hand into his waistcoat.

## CHAPTER VI.

### WHEREIN MY FATHER CONTINUES HIS STORY.

"THERE is not a mystical creation, type, symbol, or poetical invention for meanings abstruse, recondite, and incomprehensible, which is not represented by the female gender," said my father, having his hand quite buried in his waistcoat. "There is the Sphynx, and the Chimæra, and Isis, whose veil no man had ever lifted: they are all ladies, Kitty, every one of them! And so was Persephone, who must be always either in heaven or hell—and Hecate, who was one thing by night and another by day. The Sibyls were females; and so were the Gorgons, the Harpies, the Furies, the Fates, and the Teutonic Valkyrs, Nornies, and Hela herself: in short, all representations of ideas, obscure, inscrutable, and portentous, are nouns feminine."

Heaven bless my father! Augustine Caxton was himself again! I began to fear that the story had

slipped away from him, lost in that labyrinth of learning. But, luckily, as he paused for breath, his look fell on those limpid blue eyes of my mother's, and that honest open brow of hers, which had certainly nothing in common with Sphynges, Chimæras, Fates, Furies, or Valkyrs; and, whether his heart smote him, or his reason made him own that he had fallen into a very disingenuous and unsound train of assertion, I know not, but his front relaxed, and with a smile he resumed—"Ellinor was the last person in the world to deceive any one willingly. Did she deceive me and Roland that we both, though not conceited men, fancied that, if we had dared to speak openly of love, we had not so dared in vain? or do you think, Kitty, that a woman really can love (not much, perhaps, but somewhat) two or three, or half a dozen at a time?"

"Impossible!" cried my mother. "And as for this Lady Ellinor, I am shocked at her—I don't know what to call it!"

"Nor I either, my dear," said my father, slowly taking his hand from his waistcoat, as if the effort were too much for him, and the problem were insoluble. "But this, begging your pardon, I do think, that before a young woman does really, truly, and cordially centre her affections on one object, she suffers fancy, imagination, the desire of power,

curiosity, or heaven knows what, to simulate, even to her own mind, pale reflexions of the luminary not yet risen—parhelia that precede the sun. Don't judge of Roland as you see him now, Pisistratus—grim, and gray, and formal; imagine a nature soaring high amongst daring thoughts, or exuberant with the nameless poetry of youthful life—with a frame matchless for bounding elasticity—an eye bright with haughty fire—a heart from which noble sentiments sprang like sparks from an anvil. Lady Ellinor had an ardent, inquisitive imagination. This bold fiery nature must have moved her interest. On the other hand, she had an instructed, full, and eager mind. Am I vain if I say, now after the lapse of so many years, that in my mind her intellect felt companionship? When a woman loves, and marries, and settles, why then she becomes—a one whole, a completed being. But a girl like Ellinor has in her many women. Various herself, all varieties please her. I do believe that, if either of us had spoken the word boldly, Lady Ellinor would have shrunk back to her own heart—examined it, tasked it, and given a frank and generous answer. And he who had spoken first might have had the better chance not to receive a 'No.' But neither of us spoke. And perhaps she was rather curious to know if she had made an impression, than anxious to create it. It was not that

she willingly deceived us, but her whole atmosphere was delusion. Mists come before the sunrise. However this be, Roland and I were not long in detecting each other. And hence arose, first coldness, then jealousy, then quarrel."

"Oh, my father, your love must have been indeed powerful, to have made a breach between the hearts of two such brothers!"

"Yes," said my father; "it was amidst the old ruins of the castle, there, where I had first seen Ellinor—that, winding my arm round Roland's neck, as I found him seated amongst the weeds and stones, his face buried in his hands—it was there that I said —'Brother, we both love this woman! My nature is the calmer of the two, I shall feel the loss less. Brother, shake hands, and God speed you, for I go!'"

"Austin!" murmured my mother, sinking her head on my father's breast.

"And therewith we quarrelled. For it was Roland who insisted, while the tears rolled down his eyes, and he stamped his foot on the ground, that he was the intruder, the interloper—that he had no hope—that he had been a fool and a madman—and that it was for him to go! Now, while we were disputing, and words began to run high, my father's old servant entered the desolate place, with a note from Lady

Ellinor to me, asking for the loan of some book I had praised. Roland saw the handwriting, and while I turned the note over and over irresolutely, before I broke the seal, he vanished.

"He did not return to my father's house. We did not know what had become of him. But I, thinking over that impulsive volcanic nature, took quick alarm. And I went in search of him; came on his track at last; and, after many days, found him in a miserable cottage amongst the most dreary of the dreary wastes which form so large a part of Cumberland. He was so altered I scarcely knew him. To be brief, we came at last to a compromise. We would go back to Compton. This suspense was intolerable. One of us at least should take courage and learn his fate. But who should speak first? We drew lots, and the lot fell on me.

"And now that I was really to pass the Rubicon, now that I was to impart that secret hope which had animated me so long—been to me a new life—what were my sensations? My dear boy, depend on it that that age is the happiest, when such feelings as I felt then can agitate us no more. They are mistakes in the serene order of that majestic life which heaven meant for thoughtful man. Our souls should be as stars on earth, not as meteors and tortured comets. What could I offer to Ellinor—to her father? What

but a future of patient labour? And in either answer, what alternative of misery! — my own existence shattered, or Roland's noble heart!

"Well, we went to Compton. In our former visits we had been almost the only guests. Lord Rainsforth did not much affect the intercourse of country squires, less educated then than now. And in excuse for Ellinor and for us, we were almost the only men of her own age she had seen in that large dull house. But now the London season had broken up, the house was filled; there was no longer that familiar and constant approach to the mistress of the Hall, which had made us like one family. Great ladies, fine people were round her; a look, a smile, a passing word, were as much as I had a right to expect. And the talk, too, how different! Before, I could speak on books, — I was at home there! Roland could pour forth his dreams, his chivalrous love for the past, his bold defiance of the unknown future. And Ellinor, cultivated and fanciful, could sympathise with both. And her father, scholar and gentleman, could sympathise too. But now—"

# CHAPTER VII.

### WHEREIN MY FATHER BRINGS ABOUT HIS DENOUEMENT.

"IT is no use in the world," said my father, "to know all the languages expounded in grammars and splintered up into lexicons, if we don't learn the language of the world. It is a talk apart, Kitty," cried my father warming up. "It is an ANAGLYPH —a spoken anaglyph, my dear! If all the hieroglyphs of the Egyptians had been A B C to you, still if you did not know the anaglyph, you would know nothing of the true mysteries of the priests.*

"Neither Roland nor I knew one symbol-letter of the anaglyph. Talk, talk—talk on persons we never heard of, things we never cared for. All *we* thought of importance, puerile or pedantic trifles — all we thought so trite and childish, the grand momentous

* The anaglyph was peculiar to the Egyptian priests—the hieroglyph generally known to the well educated.

business of life! If you found a little schoolboy, on his half-holiday, fishing for minnows with a crooked pin, and you began to tell him of all the wonders of the deep, the laws of the tides, and the antediluvian relics of iguanodon and ichthyosaurus—nay, if you spoke but of pearl fisheries, and coral banks, or water-kelpies and naïads, would not the little boy cry out peevishly, 'Don't tease me with all that nonsense! let me fish in peace for my minnows.' I think the little boy is right after his own way—it was to fish for minnows that he came out, poor child, not to hear about iguanodons and water-kelpies!

"So the company fished for minnows, and not a word could we say about our pearl fisheries and coral banks! And as for fishing for minnows ourselves, my dear boy, we should have been less bewildered if you had asked us to fish for a mermaid! Do you see, now, one reason why I have let you go thus early into the world? Well, but amongst these minnow-fishers there was one who fished with an air that made the minnows look larger than salmons.

"Trevanion had been at Cambridge with me. We were even intimate. He was a young man like myself, with his way to make in the world. Poor as I—of a family upon a par with mine—old enough, but decayed. There was, however, this difference between us. He had connexions in the great world—

I had none. Like me, his chief pecuniary resource was a college fellowship. Now, Trevanion had established a high reputation at the university; but less as a scholar, though a pretty fair one, than as a man to rise in life. Every faculty he had was an energy. He aimed at everything—lost some things, gained others. He was a great speaker in a debating society, a member of some politico-economical club. He was an eternal talker—brilliant, various, paradoxical, florid—different from what he is now. For, dreading fancy, his career since has been one effort to curb it. But all his mind attached itself to something that we Englishmen call solid; it was a large mind—not, my dear Kitty, like a fine whale sailing through knowledge from the pleasure of sailing—but like a polypus, that puts forth all its feelers for the purpose of catching hold of something. Trevanion had gone at once to London from the university: his reputation and his talk dazzled his connexions, not unjustly. They made an effort—they got him into parliament: he had spoken, he had succeeded. He came to Compton in the flush of his virgin fame. I cannot convey to you, who know him now—with his care-worn face, and abrupt dry manner,—reduced by perpetual gladiatorship to the skin and bone of his former self—what that man was when he first stepped into the arena of life.

"You see, my listeners, that you have to recollect that we middle-aged folks were young then—that is to say, we were as different from what we are now, as the green bough of summer is from the dry wood, out of which we make a ship or a gate-post. Neither man nor wood comes to the uses of life till the green leaves are stripped and the sap gone. And then the uses of life transform us into strange things with other names: the tree is a tree no more—it is a gate or a ship; the youth is a youth no more, but a one-legged soldier; a hollow-eyed statesman; a scholar spectacled and slippered! When Micyllus—(here the hand slides into the waistcoat again!)—when Micyllus," said my father, "asked the cock that had once been Pythagoras,* if the affair of Troy was really as Homer told it, the cock replied scornfully, 'How could Homer know anything about it?—at that time he was a camel in Bactria.' Pisistratus, according to the doctrine of metempsychosis, you might have been a Bactrian camel—when that which to my life was the siege of Troy saw Roland and Trevanion before the walls.

"Handsome you can see that Trevanion has been; but the beauty of his countenance then was in its perpetual play, its intellectual eagerness; and his conversation was so discursive, so various, so animated,

* LUCIAN, *The Dream of Micyllus.*

and, above all, so full of the things of the day! If he had been a priest of Serapis for fifty years, he could not have known the Anaglyph better! Therefore he filled up every crevice and pore of that hollow society with his broken, inquisitive, petulant light. Therefore he was admired, talked of, listened to; and everybody said, 'Trevanion is a rising man.'

"Yet I did not do him then the justice I have done since—for we students and abstract thinkers are apt too much, in our first youth, to look to the *depth* of a man's mind or knowledge, and not enough to the *surface* it may cover. There may be more water in a flowing stream, only four feet deep, and certainly more force and more health, than in a sullen pool, thirty yards to the bottom! I did not do Trevanion justice. I did not see how naturally he realised Lady Ellinor's ideal. I have said that she was like many women in one. Trevanion was a thousand men in one. He had learning to please her mind, eloquence to dazzle her fancy, beauty to please her eye, reputation precisely of the kind to allure her vanity, honour and conscientious purpose to satisfy her judgment. And, above all, he was ambitious. Ambitious not as I—not as Roland was, but ambitious as Ellinor was: ambitious, not to realise some grand ideal in the silent heart, but to grasp the practical positive substances that lay without.

"Ellinor was a child of the great world, and so was he.

"I saw not all this, nor did Roland; and Trevanion seemed to pay no particular court to Ellinor.

"But the time approached when I ought to speak. The house began to thin. Lord Rainsforth had leisure to resume his easy conferences with me; and one day, walking in his garden, he gave me the opportunity. For I need not say, Pisistratus," said my father, looking at me earnestly, "that before any man of honour, especially if of inferior worldly pretensions, will open his heart seriously to the daughter, it is his duty to speak first to the parent, whose confidence has imposed that trust." I bowed my head and coloured.

"I know not how it was," continued my father, "but Lord Rainsforth turned the conversation on Ellinor. After speaking of his expectations in his son, who was returning home, he said, 'But he will of course enter public life,—will, I trust, soon marry, have a separate establishment, and I shall see but little of him. My Ellinor!—I cannot bear the thought of parting wholly with her. And that, to say the selfish truth, is one reason why I have never wished her to marry a rich man, and so leave me for ever. I could hope that she will give herself to one who may be contented to reside at least great part of the year with me—who may bless me with another son, not

steal from me a daughter. I do not mean that he should waste his life in the country; his occupations would probably lead him to London. I care not where my *house* is—all I want is to keep my *home*. You know' (he added, with a smile that I thought meaning,) 'how often I have implied to you that I have no vulgar ambition for Ellinor. Her portion must be very small, for my estate is strictly entailed, and I have lived too much up to my income all my life to hope to save much now. But her tastes do not require expense; and while I live, at least, there need be no change. She can only prefer a man whose talents, congenial to hers, will win their own career, and ere I die that career may be made.' Lord Rainsforth paused; and then—how, in what words I know not,—but out all burst!—my long-suppressed, timid, anxious, doubtful, fearful love. The strange energy it had given to a nature till then so retiring and calm! My recent devotion to the law,—my confidence that, with such a prize, I could succeed—it was but a transfer of labour from one study to another. Labour could conquer all things, and custom sweeten them in the conquest. The bar was a less brilliant career than the senate. But the first aim of the poor man should be independence. In short, Pisistratus, wretched egotist that I was, I forgot Roland in that moment; and I spoke as one who felt his life was in his words.

"Lord Rainsforth looked at me, when I had done, with a countenance full of affection—but it was not cheerful.

"'My dear Caxton,' said he, tremulously, 'I own that I once wished this—wished it from the hour I knew you; but why did you so long—I never suspected that—nor I am sure did Ellinor.' He stopped short, and added quickly—'However, go and speak, as you have spoken to me, to Ellinor. Go, it may not yet be too late.—And yet—but go.'

"Too late!—what meant those words? Lord Rainsforth had turned hastily down another walk, and left me alone, to ponder over an answer which concealed a riddle. Slowly I took my way towards the house, and sought Lady Ellinor, half hoping, half dreading to find her alone. There was a little room communicating with a conservatory, where she usually sat in the morning. Thither I took my course.

"That room, I see it still!—the walls covered with pictures from her own hand, many were sketches of the haunts we had visited together—the simple ornaments, womanly but not effeminate—the very books on the table that had been made familiar by dear associations. Yes! there, the *Tasso* in which we had read together the episode of *Clorinda*—there, the *Æschylus* in which I translated to her the *Prometheus*. Pedantries these might seem to some; pedantries,

perhaps, they were; but they were proofs of that congeniality which had knit the man of books to the daughter of the world. That room—it was the home of my heart! Such, in my vanity of spirit, methought would be the air round a home to come. I looked about me, troubled and confused, and, halting timidly, I saw Ellinor before me, leaning her face on her hand, her cheek more flushed than usual, and tears in her eyes. I approached in silence, and as I drew my chair to the table, my eye fell on a glove on the floor. It was a man's glove. Do you know," said my father, "that once, when I was very young, I saw a Dutch picture called The Glove, and the subject was of murder. There was a weed-grown marshy pool, a desolate dismal landscape, that of itself inspired thoughts of ill deeds and terror. And two men, as if walking by chance, came to this pool, the finger of one pointed to a blood-stained glove, and the eyes of both were fixed on each other, as if there were no need of words. That glove told its tale! The picture had long haunted me in my boyhood, but it never gave me so uneasy and fearful a feeling as did that real glove upon the floor. Why? My dear Pisistratus, the theory of forebodings involves one of those questions on which we may ask 'why' for ever. More chilled than I had been in speaking to her father, I took heart at last and spoke to Ellinor"——

My father stopped short; the moon had risen, and was shining full into the room and on his face. And by that light the face was changed; young emotions had brought back youth—my father looked a young man. But what pain was there! If the memory alone could raise what, after all, was but the ghost of suffering, what had been its living reality! Involuntarily I seized his hand; my father pressed it convulsively, and said, with a deep breath—"It was too late; Trevanion was Lady Ellinor's accepted, plighted, happy lover. My dear Katherine, I do not envy him now: look up, sweet wife! look up!"

## CHAPTER VIII.

"ELLINOR (let me do her justice) was shocked at my silent emotion. No human lip could utter more tender sympathy, more noble self-reproach; but that was no balm to my wound. So I left the house—so I never returned to the law—so all impetus, all motive for exertion, seemed taken from my being—so I went back into books. And so, a moping, despondent, worthless mourner might I have been to the end of my days, but that heaven, in its mercy, sent thy mother, Pisistratus, across my path; and day and night I bless God and her, for I have been, and am—oh, indeed, I am, a happy man!"

My mother threw herself on my father's breast, sobbing violently, and then turned from the room without a word,—my father's eye, swimming in tears, followed her; and then, after pacing the room for some moments in silence, he came up to me, and leaning his arm on my shoulder, whispered, "Can

you guess why I have now told you all this, my son?"

"Yes, partly: thank you, father," I faltered, and sat down, for I felt faint.

"Some sons," said my father, seating himself beside me, "would find in their father's follies and errors an excuse for their own; not so will you, Pisistratus."

"I see no folly, no error, sir—only nature and sorrow."

"Pause, ere you thus think," said my father. "Great was the folly, and great the error, of indulging imagination that had no basis—of linking the whole usefulness of my life to the will of a human creature like myself. Heaven did not design the passion of love to be this tyrant; nor is it so with the mass and multitude of human life. We dreamers, solitary students like me, or half-poets like poor Roland, make our own disease. How many years, even after I had regained serenity, as your mother gave me a home long not appreciated, have I wasted! The mainspring of my existence was snapped—I took no note of time. And therefore now, you see, late in life the Nemesis wakes. I look back with regret at powers neglected, opportunities gone. Galvanically I brace up energies half palsied by disuse; and you see me, rather than rest quiet and good for nothing, talked into what, I dare say, are sad follies, by an Uncle Jack!

And now I behold Ellinor again; and I say, in wonder, All this—all this—all this agony, all this torpor, for that haggard face, that worldly spirit! So is it ever in life. Mortal things fade; immortal things spring more freshly with every step to the tomb.

"Ah!" continued my father, with a sigh, "it would not have been so, if at your age I had found out the secret of the saffron bag!"

## CHAPTER IX.

"AND Roland, sir," said I—"how did he take it?"

"With all the indignation of a proud unreasonable man. More indignant, poor fellow, for me than himself. And so did he wound and gall me by what he said of Ellinor,—and so did he rage against me because I would not share his rage,—that again we quarrelled. We parted, and did not meet for many years. We came into sudden possession of our little fortunes. His he devoted (as you may know) to the purchase of the old ruins, and the commission in the army, which had always been his dream—and so went his way, wrathful. My share gave me an excuse for indolence,—it satisfied all my wants; and when my old tutor died, and his young child became my ward, and, somehow or other, from my ward my wife, it allowed me to resign my fellowship, and live amongst my books—still as a book myself. One comfort, somewhat before my marriage, I had conceived; and that, too, Roland has since said

was comfort to him. Ellinor became an heiress. Her poor brother died; and all of the estate that did not pass in the male line devolved on her. That fortune made a gulf between us almost as wide as her marriage. For Ellinor, poor and portionless, in spite of her rank, I could have worked, striven, slaved. But Ellinor RICH! it would have crushed me. This was a comfort. But still, still the past—that perpetual aching sense of something that had seemed the essential of life withdrawn from life, evermore, evermore! What was left was not sorrow, it was a void. Had I lived more with men, and less with dreams and books, I should have made my nature large enough to bear the loss of a single passion. But in solitude we shrink up. No plant so much as man needs the sun and the air. I comprehend now why most of our best and wisest men have lived in capitals; and therefore again I say, that one scholar in a family is enough. Confiding in your sound heart and strong honour, I turn you thus betimes on the world. Have I done wrong? Prove that I have not, my child. Do you know what a very good man has said?—Listen and follow my precept, not example.

"'The state of the world is such, and so much depends on action, that everything seems to say aloud to every man, 'Do something—do it—do it!'"*

* *Remains of the Rev. Richard Cecil*, p. 349.

I was profoundly touched, and I rose refreshed and hopeful, when suddenly the door opened, and who or what in the world should come in; but certainly he, she, it, or they, shall not come into this chapter!—On that point I am resolved. No, my dear young lady, I am extremely flattered;—I feel for your curiosity; but really not a peep—not one! And yet—well then, if you will have it, and look so coaxingly—who or what, I say, should come in abrupt, unexpected—taking away one's breath, not giving one time to say, "By your leave, or with your leave," but making one's mouth stand open with surprise, and one's eyes fix in a big round stupid stare, but—

THE END OF THE CHAPTER.

# PART EIGHTH.

# PART EIGHTH.

## CHAPTER I.

THERE entered, in the front drawing-room of my father's house in Russell Street—an Elf!!! clad in white,—small, delicate, with curls of jet over her shoulders;—with eyes so large and so lustrous that they shone through the room, as no eyes merely human could possibly shine. The Elf approached, and stood facing us. The sight was so unexpected, and the apparition so strange, that we remained for some moments in startled silence. At length my father, as the bolder and wiser man of the two, and the more fitted to deal with the eerie things of another world, had the audacity to step close up to the little creature, and, bending down to examine its face, said, "What do you want, my pretty child?"

Pretty child! was it only a pretty child after all? Alas, it would be well if all we mistake for fairies at the first glance could resolve themselves only into pretty children!

"Come," answered the child, with a foreign accent, and taking my father by the lappet of his coat, "come, poor papa is so ill! I am frightened! come—and save him—"

"Certainly," exclaimed my father quickly: "where's my hat, Sisty? Certainly, my child, we will go and save papa."

"But who is papa?" asked Pisistratus—a question that would never have occurred to my father. He never asked who or what the sick papas of poor children were, when the children pulled him by the lappet of his coat.—"Who is papa?"

The child looked hard at me, and the big tears rolled from those large luminous eyes, but quite silently. At this moment, a full-grown figure filled up the threshold, and, emerging from the shadow, presented to us the aspect of a stout, well-favoured young woman. She dropped a curtsy, and then said, mincingly,

"Oh, miss, you ought to have waited for me, and not alarmed the gentlefolks by running up stairs in that way. If you please, sir, I was settling with the cabman, and he was so imperent: them low fellows

always are, when they have only us poor women to deal with, sir,—and ——"

"But what is the matter?" cried I, for my father had taken the child in his arms, soothingly, and she was now weeping on his breast.

"Why, you see, sir, (another curtsy,) the gent only arrived last night at our hotel, sir—The Lamb, close by Lunnun Bridge—and he was taken ill—and he's not quite in his right mind like:—so we sent for the doctor, and the doctor looked at the brass plate on the gent's carpet-bag, sir,—and then he looked into the *Court Guide*, and he said, 'There is a Mr Caxton in Great Russell Street,—is he any relation?' and this young lady said, 'That's my papa's brother, and we were going there.'—And so, sir, as the Boots was out, I got into a cab, and miss would come with me, and ——"

"Roland—Roland ill! Quick—quick, quick!" cried my father; and, with the child still in his arms, he ran down the stairs. I followed with his hat, which, of course, he had forgotten. A cab, by good luck, was passing our very door; but the chambermaid would not let us enter it till she had satisfied herself that it was not the same she had dismissed. This preliminary investigation completed, we entered, and drove to The Lamb.

The chambermaid, who sate opposite, passed the

time in ineffectual overtures to release my father of the little girl, who still clung nestling to his breast,—in a long epic, much broken into episodes, of the causes which had led to her dismissal of the late cabman, who, to swell his fare, had thought proper to take a "circumbendibus!"—and with occasional tugs at her cap, and smoothings down of her gown, and apologies for being such a figure, especially when her eyes rested on my satin cravat, or drooped on my shining boots.

Arrived at The Lamb, the chambermaid, with conscious dignity, led us up a large staircase, which seemed interminable. As she mounted the region above the third story, she paused to take breath, and inform us, apologetically, that the house was full, but that, if the "gent" stayed over Friday, he would be moved into No. 54, "with a look-out and a chimbly." My little cousin now slipped from my father's arms, and, running up the stairs, beckoned to us to follow. We did so, and were led to a door, at which the child stopped and listened; then, taking off her shoes, she stole in on tiptoe. We entered after her.

By the light of a single candle, we saw my poor uncle's face: it was flushed with fever, and the eyes had that bright, vacant stare which it is so terrible to meet. Less terrible is it to find the body wasted, the features sharp with the great life-struggle, than

to look on the face from which the mind is gone,—the eyes in which there is no recognition. Such a sight is a startling shock to that unconscious habitual materialism with which we are apt familiarly to regard those we love: for, in thus missing the mind, the heart, the affection that sprang to ours, we are suddenly made aware that it was the something *within* the form, and not the form itself, that was so dear to us. The form itself is still, perhaps, little altered; but that lip which smiles no welcome, that eye which wanders over us as strangers, that ear which distinguishes no more our voices,—the *friend* we sought is not there! Even our own love is chilled back—grows a kind of vague superstitious terror. Yes, it was not the matter, still present to us, which had conciliated all those subtle nameless sentiments which are classed and fused in the word "*affection*,"—it was the airy, intangible, electric *something*,—the absence of which now appals us.

I stood speechless—my father crept on, and took the hand that returned no pressure:—The child only did not seem to share our emotions,—but, clambering on the bed, laid her cheek on the breast and was still.

"Pisistratus," whispered my father at last, and I stole near, hushing my breath—"Pisistratus, if your mother were here!"

I nodded; the same thought had struck us both.

His deep wisdom, my active youth, both felt their nothingness then and there. In the sick chamber, both turned helplessly to miss the *woman*.

So I stole out, descended the stairs, and stood in the open air in a sort of stunned amaze. Then the tramp of feet, and the roll of wheels, and the great London roar, revived me. That contagion of practical life which lulls the heart and stimulates the brain,—what an intellectual mystery there is in its common atmosphere! In another moment I had singled out, like an inspiration, from a long file of those ministrants of our Trivia, the cab of the lightest shape and with the strongest horse, and was on my way, not to my mother's, but to Dr M—— H——, Manchester Square, whom I knew as the medical adviser to the Trevanions. Fortunately, that kind and able physician was at home, and he promised to be with the sufferer before I myself could join him. I then drove to Russell Street, and broke to my mother, as cautiously as I could, the intelligence with which I was charged.

When we arrived at The Lamb, we found the doctor already writing his prescription and injunctions: the activity of the treatment announced the danger. I flew for the surgeon who had been before called in. Happy those who are strange to that indescribable silent bustle which the sick-room at times

presents—that conflict which seems almost hand to hand between life and death—when all the poor, unresisting, unconscious frame is given up to the war against its terrible enemy; the dark blood flowing—flowing; the hand on the pulse, the hushed suspense, every look on the physician's bended brow; then the sinaplasms to the feet, and the ice to the head; and now and then, through the lull or the low whispers, the incoherent voice of the sufferer—babbling, perhaps, of green fields and fairyland, while your hearts are breaking! Then, at length, the sleep—in that sleep, perhaps, the crisis—the breathless watch, the slow waking, the first *sane* words—the old smile again, only fainter—your gushing tears, your low—"Thank God! thank God!"

Picture all this; it is past: Roland has spoken—his sense has returned—my mother is leaning over him—his child's small hands are clasped round his neck—the surgeon, who has been there six hours, has taken up his hat, and smiles gaily as he nods farewell—and my father is leaning against the wall, his face covered with his hands.

## CHAPTER II.

ALL this had been so sudden that, to use the trite phrase—for no other is so expressive—it was like a dream. I felt an absolute, an imperious want of solitude, of the open air. The swell of gratitude almost stifled me—the room did not seem large enough for my big heart. In early youth, if we find it difficult to control our feelings, so we find it difficult to vent them in the presence of others. On the spring side of twenty, if anything affects us, we rush to lock ourselves up in our room, or get away into the streets or the fields; in our earlier years we are still the savages of Nature, and we do as the poor brute does, —the wounded stag leaves the herd, and, if there is anything on a dog's faithful heart, he slinks away into a corner.

Accordingly, I stole out of the hotel, and wandered through the streets, which were quite deserted. It was about the first hour of dawn, the most comfort-

less hour there is, especially in London! But I only felt freshness in the raw air, and soothing in the desolate stillness. The love my uncle inspired was very remarkable in its nature: it was not like that quiet affection with which those advanced in life must usually content themselves, but connected with the more vivid interest that youth awakens. There was in him still so much of vivacity and fire, in his errors and crotchets so much of the self-delusion of youth, that one could scarce fancy him other than young. Those Quixotic exaggerated notions of honour, that romance of sentiment, which no hardship, care, grief, disappointment, could wear away, (singular in a period when, at two-and-twenty, young men declare themselves *blasés!*) seemed to leave him all the charm of boyhood. A season in London had made me more a man of the world, older in heart than he was. Then, the sorrow that gnawed him with such silent sternness. No, Captain Roland was one of those men who seize hold of your thoughts, who mix themselves up with your lives. The idea that Roland should die—die with the load at his heart unlightened, was one that seemed to take a spring out of the wheels of nature, an object out of the aims of life—of my life at least. For I had made it one of the ends of my existence to bring back the son to the father, and restore the smile that must have been gay

once, to the downward curve of that iron lip. But Roland was now out of danger,—and yet, like one who has escaped shipwreck, I trembled to look back on the danger past; the voice of the devouring deep still boomed in my ears. While rapt in my reveries, I stopped mechanically to hear a clock strike—four; and, looking round, I perceived that I had wandered from the heart of the city, and was in one of the streets that lead out of the Strand. Immediately before me, on the door-steps of a large shop, whose closed shutters wore as obstinate a stillness as if they had guarded the secrets of seventeen centuries in a street in Pompeii,—reclined a form fast asleep; the arm propped on the hard stone supporting the head, and the limbs uneasily strewn over the stairs. The dress of the slumberer was travel-stained, tattered, yet with the remains of a certain pretence: an air of faded, shabby, penniless gentility made poverty more painful, because it seemed to indicate unfitness to grapple with it. The face of this person was hollow and pale, but its expression, even in sleep, was fierce and hard. I drew near and nearer; I recognised the countenance, the regular features, the raven hair, even a peculiar gracefulness of posture: the young man whom I had met at the inn by the way-side, and who had left me alone with the Savoyard and his mice in the churchyard, was before me. I

remained behind the shadow of one of the columns of the porch, leaning against the area rails and irresolute whether or not so slight an acquaintance justified me in waking the sleeper, when a policeman, suddenly emerging from an angle in the street, terminated my deliberations with the decision of his practical profession; for he laid hold of the young man's arm and shook it roughly,—"You must not lie here, get up and go home!" The sleeper woke with a quick start, rubbed his eyes, looked round, and fixed them upon the policeman so haughtily that that discriminating functionary probably thought that it was not from sheer necessity that so improper a couch had been selected, and with an air of greater respect he said, "You have been drinking, young man,—can you find your way home?"

"Yes," said the youth, resettling himself, "you see I have found it!"

"By the Lord Harry!" muttered the policeman, "if he ben't going to sleep again! Come, come, walk on, or I must walk you off."

My old acquaintance turned round. "Policeman," said he, with a strange sort of smile, "what do you think this lodging is worth?—I don't say for the night, for you see that is over, but for the next two hours? The lodging is primitive, but it suits me; I should think a shilling would be a fair price for it, eh?"

"You love your joke, sir," said the policeman, with a brow much relaxed, and opening his hand mechanically.

"Say a shilling, then—it is a bargain! I hire it of you upon credit. Good-night, and call me at six o'clock."

With that the young man settled himself so resolutely, and the policeman's face exhibited such bewilderment, that I burst out laughing, and came from my hiding-place.

The policeman looked at me. "Do you know this —this"—

"This gentleman?" said I, gravely. "Yes, you may leave him to me;" and I slipped the price of the lodging into the policeman's hand. He looked at the shilling—he looked at me—he looked up the street and down the street—shook his head, and walked off. I then approached the youth, touched him, and said —"Can you remember me, sir; and what have you done with Mr Peacock?"

STRANGER—(*after a pause.*)—I remember you; your name is Caxton.

PISISTRATUS.—And yours?

STRANGER.—Poor-devil, if you ask my pockets—pockets, which are the symbols of man; Dare-devil, if you ask my heart. (Surveying me from head to foot;) the world seems to have smiled on you, Mr

Caxton! Are you not ashamed to speak to a wretch lying on the stones?—but, to be sure, no one sees you.

PISISTRATUS—(*sententiously.*)—Had I lived in the last century, I might have found Samuel Johnson lying on the stones.

STRANGER—(*rising.*)—You have spoilt my sleep; you had a right, since you paid for the lodging. Let me walk with you a few paces; you need not fear—I do not pick pockets—yet!

PISISTRATUS.—You say the world has smiled on me; I fear it has frowned on you. I don't say "courage," for you seem to have enough of that; but I say "*patience*," which is the rarer quality of the two.

STRANGER.—Hem!—(again looking at me keenly) —Why is it that you stop to speak to me—one of whom you know nothing, or worse than nothing?

PISISTRATUS.—Because I have often thought of you; because you interest me; because—pardon me —I would help you if I can—that is, if you want help.

STRANGER.—Want!—I am one want! I want sleep—I want food;—I want the patience you recommend—patience to starve and rot. I have travelled from Paris to Boulogne on foot, with twelve sous in my pocket. Out of those twelve sous

in my pocket I saved four; with the four I went to a billiard-room at Boulogne; I won just enough to pay my passage and buy three rolls. You see I only require capital in order to make a fortune. If with four sous I can win ten francs in a night, what could I win with a capital of four sovereigns, and in the course of a year?—that is an application of the Rule of Three, which my head aches too much to calculate just at present. Well, those three rolls have lasted me three days; the last crumb went for supper last night. Therefore, take care how you offer me money, (for that is what men mean by help.) You see I have no option but to take it. But I warn you, don't expect gratitude!—I have none in me!

PISISTRATUS.—You are not so bad as you paint yourself. I would do something more for you, if I can, than lend you the little I have to offer. Will you be frank with me?

STRANGER.—That depends—I have been frank enough hitherto, I think.

PISISTRATUS.—True; so I proceed without scruple. Don't tell me your name or your condition, if you object to such confidence; but tell me if you have relations to whom you can apply? You shake your head: well, then, are you willing to work for yourself? or is it only at the billiard-table (pardon me) that you can try to make four sous produce ten francs?

STRANGER—(*musing.*)—I understand you. I have never worked yet—I abhor work. But I have no objection to try if it is in me.

PISISTRATUS.—It is in you: a man who can walk from Paris to Boulogne with twelve sous in his pocket, and save four for a purpose—who can stake those four on the cool confidence in his own skill, even at billiards—who can subsist for three days on three rolls—and who, on the fourth day, can wake from the stones of a capital with an eye and a spirit as proud as yours, has in him all the requisites to subdue fortune.

STRANGER.—Do you work?—you?

PISISTRATUS.—Yes—and hard.

STRANGER.—I am ready to work, then.

PISISTRATUS.—Good. Now, what can you do?

STRANGER—(*with his odd smile.*)—Many things useful. I can split a bullet on a penknife: I know the secret tierce of Coulon, the fencing-master: I can speak two languages (besides English) like a native, even to their slang: I know every game in the cards: I can act comedy, tragedy, farce: I can drink down Bacchus himself. I can make any woman I please in love with me—that is, any woman good-for-nothing. Can I earn a handsome livelihood out of all this—wear kid gloves, and set up a cabriolet? You see my wishes are modest!

PISISTRATUS.—You speak two languages, you say, like a native—French, I suppose, is one of them?

STRANGER.—Yes.

PISISTRATUS.—Will you teach it?

STRANGER—(*haughtily.*)—No. *Je suis gentilhomme*, which means more or less than a gentleman. *Gentilhomme* means well born, because free born—teachers are slaves!

PISISTRATUS—(*unconsciously imitating Mr Trevanion.*)—Stuff!

STRANGER—(*looks angry, and then laughs.*)—Very true; stilts don't suit shoes like these! But I cannot teach: heaven help those *I* should teach!—Anything else?

PISISTRATUS.—Anything else!—you leave me a wide margin. You know French thoroughly—to write as well as speak?—that is much. Give me some address where I can find you—or will you call on me?

STRANGER.—No! Any evening at dusk I will meet you. I have no address to give; and I cannot show these rags at another man's door.

PISISTRATUS.—At nine in the evening, then, and here in the Strand, on Thursday next. I may then have found something that will suit you. Meanwhile —(*slides his purse into the Stranger's hand.* N.B.—*Purse not very full.*)

Stranger, with the air of one conferring a favour, pockets the purse; and there is something so striking in the very absence of all emotion at so accidental a rescue from starvation, that Pisistratus exclaims—

"I don't know why I should have taken this fancy to you, Mr Dare-devil, if that be the name that pleases you best. The wood you are made of seems cross-grained, and full of knots; and yet, in the hands of a skilful carver, I think it would be worth much."

STRANGER—(*startled.*)—Do you? do you? None, I believe, ever thought that before. But the same wood, I suppose, that makes the gibbet, could make the mast of a man-of-war. I tell you, however, why you have taken this fancy to me—the strong sympathise with the strong. You, too, could subdue fortune!

PISISTRATUS.—Stop; if so—if there is congeniality between us, then liking should be reciprocal. Come, say that; for half my chance of helping you is in my power to touch your heart.

STRANGER.—(*evidently softened.*)—If I were as great a rogue as I ought to be, my answer would be easy enough. As it is, I delay it. Adieu—on Thursday.

STRANGER vanishes in the labyrinth of alleys round Leicester Square.

## CHAPTER III.

On my return to The Lamb, I found that my uncle was in a soft sleep; and after a morning visit from the surgeon, and his assurance that the fever was fast subsiding, and all cause for alarm was gone, I thought it necessary to go back to Trevanion's house, and explain the reason for my night's absence. But the family had not returned from the country. Trevanion himself came up for a few hours in the afternoon, and seemed to feel much for my poor uncle's illness. Though, as usual, very busy, he accompanied me to The Lamb, to see my father, and cheer him up. Roland still continued to mend, as the surgeon phrased it; and as we went back to St James's Square, Trevanion had the consideration to release me from my oar in his galley, for the next few days. My mind, relieved from my anxiety for Roland, now turned to my new friend. It had not been without an object that I had questioned the young man as to his know-

ledge of French. Trevanion had a large correspondence in foreign countries, which was carried on in that language, and here I could be but of little help to him. He himself, though he spoke and wrote French with fluency and grammatical correctness, wanted that intimate knowledge of the most delicate and diplomatic of all languages to satisfy his classical purism. For Trevanion was a terrible *word-weigher*. His taste was the plague of my life and his own. His prepared speeches (or rather perorations) were the most finished pieces of cold diction that could be conceived under the marble portico of the Stoics,—so filed and turned, trimmed and tamed, that they never admitted a sentence that could warm the heart,—or one that could offend the ear. He had so great a horror of a vulgarism that, like Canning, he would have made a periphrasis of a couple of lines to avoid using the word 'cat.' It was only in extempore speaking that a ray of his real genius could indiscreetly betray itself. One may judge what labour such a superrefinement of taste would inflict upon a man writing in a language not his own to some distinguished statesman, or some literary institution,—knowing that language just well enough to recognise all the native elegances he failed to attain. Trevanion, at that very moment, was employed upon a statistical document, intended as a communication to a Society at Copen-

hagen, of which he was an honorary member. It had been for three weeks the torment of the whole house, especially of poor Fanny, (whose French was the best at our joint disposal.) But Trevanion had found her phraseology too mincing, too effeminate, too much that of the *boudoir*. Here, then, was an opportunity to introduce my new friend, and test the capacities that I fancied he possessed. I therefore, though with some hesitation, led the subject to "Remarks on the Mineral Treasures of Great Britain and Ireland," (such was the title of the work intended to enlighten the *savans* of Denmark;) and, by certain ingenious circumlocutions, known to all able applicants, I introduced my acquaintance with a young gentleman who possessed the most familiar and intimate knowledge of French, and who might be of use in revising the manuscript. I knew enough of Trevanion, to feel that I could not reveal the circumstances under which I had formed that acquaintance, for he was much too practical a man not to have been frightened out of his wits at the idea of submitting so classical a performance to so disreputable a scapegrace. As it was, however, Trevanion, whose mind at that moment was full of a thousand other things, caught at my suggestion, with very little cross-questioning on the subject, and, before he left London, consigned the manuscript to my charge.

"My friend is poor," said I timidly.

"Oh! as to that," cried Trevanion hastily, "if it is a matter of charity, I put my purse in your hands; but don't put my manuscript in his! If it is a matter of business it is another affair, and I must judge of his work before I can say how much it is worth—perhaps nothing!"

So ungracious was this excellent man in his very virtues!

"Nay," said I, "it is a matter of business, and so we will consider it."

"In that case," said Trevanion, concluding the matter, and buttoning his pockets, "if I dislike his work, *nothing;* if I like it, twenty guineas. Where are the evening papers?" and in another moment the member of parliament had forgotten the statist, and was pishing and tutting over the *Globe* or the *Sun*.

On Thursday, my uncle was well enough to be moved into our house; and on the same evening, I went forth to keep my appointment with the stranger. The clock struck nine as we met. The palm of punctuality might be divided between us. He had profited of the interval, since our last meeting, to repair the more obvious deficiencies of his wardrobe; and though there was something still wild, dissolute, outlandish, about his whole appearance, yet in the elastic energy of his step, and the resolute assurance of his bearing,

there was that which Nature gives to her own aristocracy,—for, as far as my observation goes, what has been called the "grand air" (and which is wholly distinct from the polish of manner, or the urbane grace of high breeding) is always accompanied, and perhaps produced, by two qualities—courage, and the desire of command. It is more common to a half-savage nature than one wholly civilised. The Arab has it, so has the American Indian: and I suspect it was more frequent among the knights and barons of the middle ages than it is among the polished gentlemen of the modern drawing-room.

We shook hands, and walked on a few moments in silence; at length thus commenced the STRANGER,—

"You have found it more difficult, I fear, than you imagined, to make the empty sack stand upright. Considering that at least one-third of those born to work cannot find it, why should I?"

PISISTRATUS.—I am hard-hearted enough to believe that work never fails to those who seek it in good earnest. It was said of some man, famous for keeping his word, that "if he had promised you an acorn, and all the oaks in England failed to produce one, he would have sent to Norway for an acorn." If I wanted work, and there was none to be had in the Old World, I would find my way to the New. But, to the point: I *have* found something for you,

which I do not think your taste will oppose, and which may open to you the means of an honourable independence. But I cannot well explain it in the streets: where shall we go?

STRANGER—(*After some hesitation.*)—I have a lodging near here, which I need not blush to take you to—I mean, that it is not among rogues and castaways.

PISISTRATUS—(*Much pleased, and taking the stranger's arm.*)—Come, then.

Pisistratus and the stranger pass over Waterloo Bridge, and pause before a small house of respectable appearance. Stranger admits them both with a latch key—leads the way to the third story—strikes a light, and does the honours to a small chamber, clean and orderly. Pisistratus explains the task to be done, and opens the manuscript. The stranger draws his chair deliberately towards the light, and runs his eye rapidly over the pages. Pisistratus trembles to see him pause before a long array of figures and calculations. Certainly it does not look inviting; but, pshaw! it is scarcely a part of the task, which limits itself to the mere correction of words.

STRANGER—(*briefly.*)—There must be a mistake here—stay!—I see,—[He turns back a few pages, and corrects with rapid precision an error in a somewhat complicated and abstruse calculation.]

PISISTRATUS—(*surprised.*)—You seem a notable arithmetician.

STRANGER.—Did I not tell you that I was skilful in all games of mingled skill and chance? It requires an arithmetical head for that: a first-rate card-player is a financier spoilt. I am certain that you could never find a man fortunate on the turf, or at the gaming-table, who had not an excellent head for figures. Well, this French is good enough apparently: there are but a few idioms, here and there, that, strictly speaking, are more English than French. But the whole is a work scarce worth paying for!

PISISTRATUS.—The work of the head fetches a price not proportioned to the quantity, but the quality. When shall I call for this?

STRANGER.—To-morrow. [And he puts the manuscript away in a drawer.]

We then conversed on various matters for nearly an hour; and my impression of this young man's natural ability was confirmed and heightened. But it was an ability as wrong and perverse in its directions or instincts as a French novelist's. He seemed to have, to a high degree, the harder portion of the reasoning faculty, but to be almost wholly without that arch beautifier of character, that sweet purifier of mere intellect—*the imagination.* For, though we are too much taught to be on our guard against imagination,

I hold it, with Captain Roland, to be the divinest kind of reason we possess, and the one that leads us the least astray. In youth, indeed, it occasions errors, but they are not of a sordid or debasing nature. Newton says that one final effect of the comets is to recruit the seas and the planets by a condensation of the vapours and exhalations therein; and so even the erratic flashes of an imagination really healthful and vigorous deepen our knowledge and brighten our lights; they recruit our seas and our stars. Of such flashes my new friend was as innocent as the sternest matter-of-fact person could desire. Fancies he had in profusion, and very bad ones; but of imagination not a *scintilla!* His mind was one of those which live in a prison of logic, and cannot, or will not, see beyond the bars: such a nature is at once positive and sceptical. This boy had thought proper to decide at once on the numberless complexities of the social world from his own harsh experience. With him the whole system was a war and a cheat. If the universe were entirely composed of knaves, he would be sure to have made his way. Now this bias of mind, alike shrewd and unamiable, might be safe enough if accompanied by a lethargic temper; but it threatened to become terrible and dangerous in one who, in default of imagination, possessed abundance of passion: and this was the case with the young outcast. Passion, in him,

comprehended many of the worst emotions which militate against human happiness. You could not contradict him, but you raised quick choler; you could not speak of wealth, but the cheek paled with gnawing envy. The astonishing natural advantages of this poor boy—his beauty, his readiness, the daring spirit that breathed around him like a fiery atmosphere—had raised his constitutional self-confidence into an arrogance that turned his very claims to admiration into prejudices against him. Irascible, envious, arrogant—bad enough, but not the worst, for these salient angles were all varnished over with a cold repellant cynicism, his passions vented themselves in sneers. There seemed in him no moral susceptibility; and, what was more remarkable in a proud nature, little or nothing of the true point of honour. He had, to a morbid excess, that desire to rise which is vulgarly called ambition, but no apparent wish for fame, or esteem, or the love of his species; only the hard wish to succeed, not shine, not serve,—succeed, that he might have the right to despise a world which galled his self-conceit, and enjoy the pleasures which the redundant nervous life in him seemed to crave. Such were the more patent attributes of a character that, ominous as it was, yet interested me, and yet appeared to me redeemable,—nay, to have in it the rude elements of a certain greatness. Ought we not to make

something great out of a youth under twenty who has, in the highest degree, quickness to conceive and courage to execute? On the other hand, all faculties that can make greatness contain those that can attain goodness. In the savage Scandinavian, or the ruthless Frank, lay the germs of a Sidney or a Bayard. What would the best of us be, if he were suddenly placed at war with the whole world? And this fierce spirit *was* at war with the whole world—a war self-sought, perhaps, but it was war not the less. You must surround the savage with peace, if you want the virtues of peace.

I cannot say that it was in a single interview and conference that I came to these convictions; but I am rather summing up the impressions which I received as I saw more of this person, whose destiny I had presumed to take under my charge.

In going away, I said, "But, at all events, you have a name in your lodgings: whom am I to ask for when I call to-morrow?"

"Oh, you may know my name now," said he, smiling: "it is Vivian—Francis Vivian."

## CHAPTER IV.

I REMEMBER one morning, when a boy, loitering by an old wall, to watch the operations of a garden spider, whose web seemed to be in great request. When I first stopped, she was engaged very quietly with a fly of the domestic species, whom she managed with ease and dignity. But just when she was most interested in that absorbing employment, came a couple of May-flies, and then a gnat, and then a blue-bottle,—all at different angles of the web. Never was a poor spider so distracted by her good fortune! She evidently did not know which godsend to take first. The aboriginal victim being released, she slid half-way towards the May-flies; then one of her eight eyes caught sight of the blue-bottle! and she shot off in that direction:—when the hum of the gnat again diverted her; and in the middle of this perplexity, pounce came a young wasp in a violent passion! Then the spider evidently lost her presence of mind;

she became clean demented; and after standing, stupid and stock-still, in the middle of her meshes, for a minute or two, she ran off to her hole as fast as she could run, and left her guests to shift for themselves. I confess that I am somewhat in the dilemma of the attractive and amiable insect I have just described. I got on well enough while I had only my domestic fly to see after. But now that there is something fluttering at every end of my net, (and especially since the advent of that passionate young wasp, who is fuming and buzzing in the nearest corner!) I am fairly at a loss which I should first grapple with—and, alas! unlike the spider, I have no hole where I can hide myself, and let the web do the weaver's work. But I will imitate the spider as far as I can; and while the rest hum and struggle away their impatient, unnoticed hour, I will retreat into the inner labyrinth of my own life.

The illness of my uncle, and my renewed acquaintance with Vivian, had naturally sufficed to draw my thoughts from the rash and unpropitious love I had conceived for Fanny Trevanion. During the abscence of the family from London, (and they stayed some time longer than had been expected) I had leisure, however, to recall my father's touching history, and the moral it had so obviously preached to me; and I formed so many good resolutions, that it was with an

untrembling hand that I welcomed Miss Trevanion at last to London, and with a firm heart that I avoided, as much as possible, the fatal charm of her society. The slow convalescence of my uncle gave me a just excuse to discontinue our rides. What time Trevanion spared me, it was natural that I should spend with my family. I went to no balls nor parties. I even absented myself from Trevanion's periodical dinners. Miss Trevanion at first rallied me on my seclusion, with her usual lively malice. But I continued worthily to complete my martyrdom. I took care that no reproachful look at the gaiety that wrung my soul should betray my secret. Then Fanny seemed either hurt or disdainful, and avoided altogether entering her father's study; all at once, she changed her tactics, and was seized with a strange desire for knowledge, which brought her into the room to look for a book, or ask a question, ten times a-day. I was proof to all. But, to speak truth, I was profoundly wretched. Looking back now, I am dismayed at the remembrance of my own sufferings: my health became seriously affected; I dreaded alike the trial of the day and the anguish of the night. My only distractions were in my visits to Vivian, and my escape to the dear circle of home. And that home was my safeguard and preservative in that crisis of my life. Its atmosphere of unpretending honour and

serene virtue strengthened all my resolutions; it braced me for my struggles against the strongest passion which youth admits, and counteracted the evil vapours of that air in which Vivian's envenomed spirit breathed and moved. Without the influence of such a home, if I had succeeded in the conduct that probity enjoined towards those in whose house I was a trusted guest, I do not think I could have resisted the contagion of that malign and morbid bitterness against fate and the world, which love, thwarted by fortune, is too inclined of itself to conceive, and in the expression of which Vivian was not without the eloquence that belongs to earnestness, whether in truth or falsehood. But, somehow or other, I never left the little room that contained the grand suffering in the face of the veteran soldier, whose lip, often quivering with anguish, was never heard to murmur; and the tranquil wisdom which had succeeded my father's early trials, (trials like my own,) and the loving smile on my mother's tender face, and the innocent childhood of Blanche, (by which name the Elf had familiarised herself to us,) whom I already loved as a sister,—without feeling that those four walls contained enough to sweeten the world, had it been filled to its capacious brim with gall and hyssop.

Trevanion had been more than satisfied with Vivian's performance—he had been struck with it.

For though the corrections in the mere phraseology had been very limited, they went beyond verbal amendments—they suggested such words as improved the thoughts; and, besides that notable correction of an arithmetical error, which Trevanion's mind was formed to over-appreciate, one or two brief annotations on the margin were boldly hazarded, prompting some stronger link in a chain of reasoning, or indicating the necessity for some further evidence in the assertion of a statement. And all this from the mere natural and naked logic of an acute mind, unaided by the smallest knowledge of the subject treated of! Trevanion threw quite enough work into Vivian's hands, and at a remuneration sufficiently liberal to realise my promise of an independence. And more than once he asked me to introduce to him my friend. But this I continued to elude—heaven knows, not from jealousy, but simply because I feared that Vivian's manner and way of talk would singularly displease one who detested presumption, and understood no eccentricities but his own.

Still Vivian, whose industry was of a strong wing, but only for short flights, had not enough to employ more than a few hours of his day, and I dreaded lest he should, from very idleness, fall back into old habits, and reseek old friendships. His cynical candour allowed that both were sufficiently disreputable

to justify grave apprehensions of such a result; accordingly, I contrived to find leisure in my evenings to lessen his *ennui*, by accompanying him in rambles through the gas-lit streets, or occasionally, for an hour or so, to one of the theatres.

Vivian's first care, on finding himself rich enough, had been bestowed on his person; and those two faculties of observation and imitation which minds so ready always eminently possess, had enabled him to achieve that graceful neatness of costume peculiar to the English gentleman. For the first few days of his metamorphosis, traces indeed of a constitutional love of show, or vulgar companionship, were noticeable; but one by one they disappeared. First went a gaudy neckcloth, with collars turned down; then a pair of spurs vanished; and lastly, a diabolical instrument that he called a cane—but which, by means of a running bullet, could serve as a bludgeon at one end, and concealed a dagger in the other—subsided into the ordinary walking-stick adapted to our peaceable metropolis. A similar change, though in a less degree, gradually took place in his manner and his conversation. He grew less abrupt in the one, and more calm, perhaps more cheerful, in the other. It was evident that he was not insensible to the elevated pleasure of providing for himself by praiseworthy exertion—of feeling for the first time that his intellect

was of use to him, *creditably*. A new world, though still dim—seen through mist and fog—began to dawn upon him.

Such is the vanity of us poor mortals, that my interest in Vivian was probably increased, and my aversion to much in him materially softened, by observing that I had gained a sort of ascendency over his savage nature. When we had first met by the road-side, and afterwards conversed in the churchyard, the ascendency was certainly not on my side. But I now came from a larger sphere of society than that in which he had yet moved. I had seen and listened to the first men in England. What had then dazzled me only, now moved my pity. On the other hand, his active mind could not but observe the change in me; and, whether from envy or a better feeling, he was willing to learn from me how to eclipse me, and resume his earlier superiority—not to be superior, chafed him. Thus he listened to me with docility when I pointed out the books which connected themselves with the various subjects incidental to the miscellaneous matters on which he was employed. Though he had less of the literary turn of mind than any one equally clever I have ever met, and had read little, considering the quantity of thought he had acquired, and the show he made of the few works with which he had voluntarily made himself familiar,

he yet resolutely sate himself down to study; and though it was clearly against the grain, I augured the more favourably from tokens of a determination to do what was at the present irksome for a purpose in the future. Yet, whether I should have approved the purpose—had I thoroughly understood it—is another question! There were abysses, both in his past life and in his character, which I could not penetrate. There was in him both a reckless frankness and a vigilant reserve: his frankness was apparent in his talk on all matters immediately before us; in the utter absence of all effort to make himself seem better than he was. His reserve was equally shown in the ingenious evasion of every species of confidence that could admit me into such secrets of his life as he chose to conceal: where he had been born, reared, and educated; how he came to be thrown on his own resources; how he had contrived, how he had subsisted, were all matters on which he had seemed to take an oath to Harpocrates, the god of silence. And yet he was full of anecdotes of what he had seen, of strange companions, whom he never named, but with whom he had been thrown. And, to do him justice, I remarked that, though his precocious experience seemed to have been gathered from the holes and corners, the sewers and drains of life, and though he seemed wholly without dislike to dishonesty, and to

regard virtue or vice with as serene an indifference as some grand poet who views them both merely as ministrants to his art, yet he never betrayed any positive breach of honesty in himself. He could laugh over the story of some ingenious fraud that he had witnessed, and seem insensible to its turpitude; but he spoke of it in the tone of an unreproving witness, not of an actual accomplice. As we grew more intimate, he felt gradually, however, that *pudor*, or instinctive shame, which the contact with minds habituated to the distinctions between wrong and right unconsciously produces, and such stories ceased. He never but once mentioned his family, and that was in the following odd and abrupt manner,—

"Ah!" cried he one day, stopping suddenly before a print-shop, "how that reminds me of my dear, dear mother."

"Which?" said I eagerly, puzzled between an engraving of Raffaelle's "Madonna," and another of "The Brigand's Wife."

Vivian did not satisfy my curiosity, but drew me on in spite of my reluctance.

"You loved your mother, then?" said I, after a pause.

"Yes, as a whelp may a tigress."

"That's a strange comparison."

"Or a bull-dog may the prize-fighter, his master! Do you like that better?"

"Not much; is it a comparison your mother would like?"

"Like?—she is dead!" said he, rather falteringly.

I pressed his arm closer to mine.

"I understand you," said he, with his cynic repellant smile. "But you do wrong to feel for my loss. I feel for it; but no one who cares for me should sympathise with my grief."

"Why?"

"Because my mother was not what the world would call a good woman. I did not love her the less for that.—And now let us change the subject."

"Nay; since you have said so much, Vivian, let me coax you to say on. Is not your father living?"

"Is not the Monument standing?"

"I suppose so,—what of that?"

"Why, it matters very little to either of us; and my question answers yours!"

I could not get on after this, and I never did get on a step farther. I must own that if Vivian did not impart his confidence liberally, neither did he seek confidence inquisitively from me. He listened with interest if I spoke of Trevanion, (for I told him frankly of my connexion with that personage, though you may be sure that I said nothing of Fanny,) and of the brilliant world that my residence with one so dis-

tinguished opened to me. But if ever, in the fulness of my heart, I began to speak of my parents, of my home, he evinced either so impertinent an *ennui*, or assumed so chilling à sneer, that I usually hurried away from him, as well as the subject, in indignant disgust. Once especially, when I asked him to let me introduce him to my father—a point on which I was really anxious, for I thought it impossible but that the devil within him would be softened by that contact—he said with his low, scornful laugh—

"My dear Caxton, when I was a child, I was so bored with 'Telemachus,' that, in order to endure it, I turned it into travesty."

"Well?"

"Are you not afraid that the same wicked disposition might make a caricature of your Ulysses?"

I did not see Mr Vivian for three days after that speech: and I should not have seen him then, only we met, by accident, under the Colonnade of the Opera-House. Vivian was leaning against one of the columns, and watching the long procession which swept to the only temple in vogue that Art has retained in the English Babel. Coaches and chariots, blazoned with arms and coronets—cabriolets (the brougham had not then replaced them) of sober hue, but exquisite appointment, with gigantic horses and pigmy "tigers," dashed on, and rolled off before him. Fair women and gay

dresses, stars and ribbons—the rank and the beauty of the patrician world—passed him by. And I could not resist the compassion with which this lonely, friendless, eager, discontented spirit inspired me—gazing on that gorgeous existence in which it fancied itself formed to shine, with the ardour of desire and the despair of exclusion. By one glimpse of that dark countenance, I read what was passing within the yet darker heart. The emotion might not be amiable, nor the thoughts wise, yet, were they unnatural? I had experienced something of them—not at the sight of gay-dressed people, of wealth and idleness, pleasure and fashion; but when, at the doors of parliament, men who have won noble names, and whose word had weight on the destinies of glorious England, brushed heedlessly by to their grand arena; or when, amidst the holiday crowd of ignoble pomp, I had heard the murmur of fame buzz and gather round some lordly labourer in art or letters. That contrast between glory so near, and yet so far, and one's own obscurity, of course I had felt it —who has not? Alas! many a youth not fated to be a Themistocles, will yet feel that the trophies of a Miltiades will not suffer him to sleep! So I went up to Vivian, and laid my hand on his shoulder.

"Ah!" said he, more gently than usual, "I am glad to see you—and to apologise—I offended you the other day. But you would not get very gracious

answers from souls in purgatory, if you talked to them of the happiness of heaven. Never speak to me about homes and fathers! Enough, I see you forgive me. Why are you not going to the opera? *You* can?"

"And you too, if you so please. A ticket is shamefully dear, to be sure; still, if you are fond of music, it is a luxury you can afford."

"Oh, you flatter me if you fancy the prudence of saving withholds me! I did go the other night, but I shall not go again. Music!—when you go to the opera, is it for the music?"

"Only partially, I own: the lights, the scene, the pageant, attract me quite as much. But I do not think the opera a very profitable pleasure for either of us. For rich idle people, I dare say, it may be as innocent an amusement as any other, but I find it a sad enervator."

"And I just the reverse—a horrible stimulant! Caxton, do you know that, ungracious as it will sound to you, I am growing impatient of this 'honourable independence!' What does it lead to?—board, clothes, and lodging,—can it ever bring me anything more?"

"At first, Vivian, you limited your aspirations to kid gloves and a cabriolet—it has brought you the kid gloves already, by-and-by it will bring the cabriolet!"

"Our wishes grow by what they feed on. You live

in the great world—you can have excitement if you please it—I want excitement, I want the world, I want room for my mind, man! Do you understand me?"

"Perfectly—and sympathise with you, my poor Vivian; but it will all come. Patience, as I preached to you while dawn rose so comfortless over the streets of London. You are not losing time—fill your mind, read, study, fit yourself for ambition. Why wish to fly till you have got your wings? Live in books now: after all, they are splendid palaces, and open to us all, rich and poor."

"Books, books!—ah, you are the son of a bookman! It is not by books that men get on in the world, and enjoy life in the meanwhile."

"I don't know that; but, my good fellow, you want to do both—get on in the world as fast as labour can, and enjoy life as pleasantly as indolence may. You want to live like the butterfly, and yet have all the honey of the bee; and, what is the very deuce of the whole, even as the butterfly, you ask every flower to grow up in a moment; and as a bee, the whole hive must be stored in a quarter of an hour! Patience, patience, patience!"

Vivian sighed a fierce sigh. "I suppose," said he, after an unquiet pause, "that the vagrant and the outlaw are strong in me, for I long to run back to my

old existence, which was all action, and therefore allowed no thought."

While he thus said, we had wandered round the Colonnade, and were in that narrow passage in which is situated the more private entrance to the opera; close by the doors of that entrance, two or three young men were lounging. As Vivian ceased, the voice of one of these loungers came laughingly to our ears.

"Oh!" it said, apparently in answer to some question, "I have a much quicker way to fortune than that; I mean to marry an heiress!"

Vivian started, and looked at the speaker. He was a very good-looking fellow. Vivian continued to look at him, and deliberately, from head to foot; he then turned away with a satisfied and thoughtful smile.

"Certainly," said I gravely, (construing the smile,) "you are right there; you are even better-looking than that heiress-hunter?"

Vivian coloured; but before he could answer, one of the loungers, as the group recovered from the gay laugh which their companion's easy coxcombry had excited, said,—

"Then, by the way, if you want an heiress, here comes one of the greatest in England; but instead of being a younger son, with three good lives between

you and an Irish peerage, one ought to be an earl at least to aspire to Fanny Trevanion!"

The name thrilled through me—I felt myself tremble—and, looking up, I saw Lady Ellinor and Miss Trevanion, as they hurried from their carriage towards the entrance of the opera. They both recognised me, and Fanny cried,—

"You here! How fortunate! You must see us into the box, even if you run away the moment after."

"But I am not dressed for the opera," said I, embarrassed.

"And why not?" asked Miss Trevanion; then, dropping her voice, she added, "Why do you desert us so wilfully?"—and, leaning her hand on my arm, I was drawn irresistibly into the lobby. The young loungers at the door made way for us, and eyed me, no doubt, with envy.

"Nay!" said I, affecting to laugh, as I saw Miss Trevanion waited for my reply. "You forget how little time I have for such amusements now,—and my uncle—"

"Oh, but mamma and I have been to see your uncle to-day, and he is nearly well—is he not, mamma? I cannot tell you how I like and admire him. He is just what I fancy a Douglas of the old day. But mamma is impatient. Well, you must dine with us to-morrow—promise!—not *adieu* but *au revoir*," and

Fanny glided to her mother's arm. Lady Ellinor, always kind and courteous to me, had good-naturedly lingered till this dialogue, or rather monologue, was over.

On returning to the passage, I found Vivian walking to and fro; he had lighted his cigar, and was smoking energetically.

"So this great heiress," said he smiling, "who, as far as I could see—under her hood—seems no less fair than rich, is the daughter, I presume, of the Mr Trevanion whose effusions you so kindly submit to me. He is very rich, then? You never said so, yet I ought to have known it: but you see I know nothing of your *beau monde*—not even that Miss Trevanion is one of the greatest heiresses in England."

"Yes, Mr Trevanion is rich," said I, repressing a sigh—"very rich."

"And you are his secretary! My dear friend, you may well offer me patience, for a large stock of yours will, I hope, be superfluous to you."

"I don't understand you."

"Yet you heard that young gentleman, as well as myself; and you are in the same house as the heiress."

"Vivian!"

"Well, what have I said so monstrous?"

"Pooh! since you refer to that young gentleman,

you heard, too, what his companion told him,—'one ought to be an earl, at least, to aspire to Fanny Trevanion!' "

"Tut! as well say that one ought to be a *millionnaire* to aspire to a million!—yet I believe those who make millions generally begin with pence."

"That belief should be a comfort and encouragement to you, Vivian. And now, good-night,—I have much to do."

"Good-night, then," said Vivian, and we parted.

I made my way to Mr Trevanion's house, and to the study. There was a formidable arrear of business waiting for me, and I sate down to it at first resolutely; but, by degrees, I found my thoughts wandering from the eternal blue-books, and the pen slipped from my hand, in the midst of an extract from a Report on Sierra Leone. My pulse beat loud and quick; I was in that state of nervous fever which only emotion can occasion. The sweet voice of Fanny rang in my ears; her eyes, as I had last met them, unusually gentle—almost beseeching—gazed upon me wherever I turned: and then, as in mockery, I heard again those words, —"One ought to be an earl, at least, to aspire to" —Oh! did I aspire? Was I vain fool so frantic?—household traitor so consummate? No, no! Then what did I under the same roof?—why stay to imbibe this sweet poison, that was corroding the very springs of

my life? At that self-question, which, had I been but a year or two older, I should have asked long before, a mortal terror seized me; the blood rushed from my heart, and left me cold—icy cold. To leave the house! leave Fanny!—never again to see those eyes—never to hear that voice!—better die of the sweet poison than of the desolate exile! I rose—I opened the windows—I walked to and fro the room: I could decide nothing—think of nothing; all my mind was in an uproar. With a violent effort at self-mastery, I approached the table again. I resolved to force myself to my task, if it were only to recollect my faculties, and enable them to bear my own torture. I turned over the books impatiently, when, lo! buried amongst them, what met my eye—archly, yet reproachfully? the face of Fanny herself! Her miniature was there. It had been, I knew, taken a few days before, by a young artist whom Trevanion patronised. I suppose he had carried it into his study to examine it, and so left it there carelessly. The painter had seized her peculiar expression—her ineffable smile—so charming, so malicious; even her favourite posture—the small head turned over the rounded Hebe-like shoulder—the eye glancing up from under the hair. I know not what change in my madness came over me; but I sank on my knees, and, kissing the miniature again and again, burst into tears. Such tears! I

did not hear the door open—I did not see the shadow steal over the floor; a light hand rested on my shoulder, trembling as it rested—I started—Fanny herself was bending over me!

"What is the matter?" she asked tenderly. "What has happened?—your uncle—your family—all well? Why are you weeping?"

I could not answer; but I kept my hands clasped over the miniature, that she might not see what they contained.

"Will you not answer? Am I not your friend?—almost your sister? Come, shall I call mamma?"

"Yes—yes; go—go."

"No, I will not go yet. What have you there?—what are you hiding?"

And innocently, and sister-like, those hands took mine; and so—and so—the picture became visible! There was a dead silence. I looked up through my tears. Fanny had recoiled some steps, and her cheek was very flushed, her eyes downcast. I felt as if I had committed a crime—as if dishonour clung to me; and yet I repressed—yes, thank Heaven! I repressed the cry that swelled from my heart, that rushed to my lips—"Pity me, for I love you!" I repressed it, and only a groan escaped me—the wail of my lost happiness! Then, rising, I laid the miniature on the table, and said, in a voice that I believe was firm—

"Miss Trevanion, you *have* been as kind as a sister to me, and therefore I was bidding a brother's farewell to your likeness; it *is* so like you—this!"

"Farewell!" echoed Fanny, still not looking up.

"Farewell—*sister!* There, I have boldly said the word; for—for"—I hurried to the door, and, there turning, added, with what I meant to be a smile—"for they say at home that I—I am not well; too much for me this; you know mothers will be foolish; and—and—I am to speak to your father to-morrow; and—good-night—God bless you, Miss Trevanion!"

# PART NINTH.

# PART NINTH.

## CHAPTER I.

AND my father pushed aside his books.

O young reader, whoever thou art,—or reader, at least, who hast been young,—canst thou not remember some time when, with thy wild troubles and sorrows as yet borne in secret, thou hast come back from that hard, stern world which opens on thee when thou puttest thy foot out of the threshold of home—come back to the four quiet walls, wherein thine elders sit in peace—and seen, with a sort of sad amaze, how calm and undisturbed all is there? That generation which has gone before thee in the path of the passions —the generation of thy parents—(not so many years, perchance, remote from thine own)—how immovably far off, in its still repose, it seems from thy turbulent

## BOOK THE FIRST.

### CHAPTER I.

my father made his books.

ing reader, whoever thou art,—or reader, at
o hast been young,—canst thou not remember
e when, with thy wild troubles and sorrows
rne in secret, thou hast come back from that
rn world which opens on thee when thou
y foot out of the threshold of home—come
e four quiet walls, wherein thine elders
—and seen, with a sort of sad amaze, how
undisturbed all is there? That generation
as gone before thee in the path of the passions
neration of thy parents—(not so many years,
remote from thine own)—how immovably
it is still repose, it seems from thy turbulent

youth! It has in it a stillness as of a classic age, antique as the statues of the Greeks. That tranquil monotony of routine into which those lives that preceded thee have merged—the occupations that they have found sufficing for their happiness, by the fireside—in the arm-chair and corner appropriated to each—how strangely they contrast thine own feverish excitement! And they make room for thee, and bid thee welcome, and then resettle to their hushed pursuits, as if nothing had happened! Nothing had happened! while in thy heart, perhaps, the whole world seems to have shot from its axis, all the elements to be at war! And you sit down, crushed by that quiet happiness which you can share no more, and smile mechanically, and look into the fire; and, ten to one, you say nothing till the time comes for bed, and you take up your candle, and creep miserably to your lonely room.

Now, if in a stage coach in the depth of winter, when three passengers are warm and snug, a fourth, all besnowed and frozen, descends from the outside and takes place amongst them, straightway all the three passengers shift their places, uneasily pull up their cloak collars, re-arrange their "comforters," feel indignantly a sensible loss of caloric—the intruder has at least made a sensation. But if you had all the snows of the Grampians in your heart, you might

enter unnoticed: take care not to tread on the toes of your opposite neighbour, and not a soul is disturbed, not a "comforter" stirs an inch! I had not slept a wink, I had not even laid down all that night —the night in which I had said farewell to Fanny Trevanion—and the next morning, when the sun rose, I wandered out—where I know not. I have a dim recollection of long, gray, solitary streets—of the river that seemed flowing in dull silence, away, far away, into some invisible eternity — trees and turf, and the gay voices of children. I must have gone from one end of the great Babel to the other: but my memory only became clear and distinct when I knocked, somewhere before noon, at the door of my father's house, and, passing heavily up the stairs, came into the drawing-room, which was the rendezvous of the little family; for, since we had been in London, my father had ceased to have his study apart, and contented himself with what he called "a corner"—a corner wide enough to contain two tables and a dumb waiter, with chairs *à discretion* all littered with books. On the opposite side of this capacious corner sat my uncle, now nearly convalescent, and he was jotting down, in his stiff military hand, certain figures in a little red account-book—for you know already that my uncle Roland was, in his expenses, the most methodical of men.

My father's face was more benign than usual, for, before him lay a proof—the first proof of his first work—his one work—the Great Book! Yes! it had positively found a press. And the first proof of your first work—ask any author what *that* is! My mother was out, with the faithful Mrs Primmins, shopping or marketing, no doubt; so, while the brothers were thus engaged, it was natural that my entrance should not make as much noise as if it had been a bomb, or a singer, or a clap of thunder, or the last "great novel of the season," or anything else that made a noise in those days. For what makes a noise now? Now, when the most astonishing thing of all is in our easy familiarity with things astounding—when we say, listlessly, "Another revolution at Paris," or "By the bye, there is the deuce to do at Vienna!"—when De Joinville is catching fish in the ponds at Claremont, and you hardly turn back to look at Metternich on the pier at Brighton!

My uncle nodded, and growled indistinctly; my father—

"Put aside his books; you have told us that already."

Sir, you are very much mistaken, it was not then that he put aside his books, for he was not then engaged in them—he was reading his proof. And he smiled, and pointed to it (the proof I mean) patheti-

cally, and with a kind of humour, as much as to say —"what can you expect, Pisistratus?—my new baby! in short clothes—or long primer, which is all the same thing!"

I took a chair between the two, and looked first at one, then at the other, and—heaven forgive me!—I felt a rebellious, ungrateful spite against both. The bitterness of my soul must have been deep indeed to have overflowed in that direction, but it did. The grief of youth is an abominable egotist, and that is the truth. I got up from the chair, and walked towards the window; it was open, and outside the window was Mrs Primmins' canary, in its cage. London air had agreed with it, and it was singing lustily. Now, when the canary saw me standing opposite to its cage, and regarding it seriously, and, I have no doubt, with a very sombre aspect, the creature stopped short, and hung its head on one side, looking at me obliquely and suspiciously. Finding that I did it no harm, it began to hazard a few broken notes, timidly and interrogatively, as it were, pausing between each; and at length, as I made no reply, it evidently thought it had solved the doubt, and ascertained that I was more to be pitied than feared—for it stole gradually into so soft and silvery a strain that, I verily believe, it did it on purpose to comfort me!—me, its old friend, whom it had unjustly suspected. Never did

any music touch me so home as did that long, plaintive cadence. And when the bird ceased, it perched itself close to the bars of the cage, and looked at me steadily with its bright intelligent eyes. I felt mine water, and I turned back and stood in the centre of the room, irresolute what to do, where to go. My father had done with the proof, and was deep in his folios. Roland had clasped his red account-book, restored it to his pocket, wiped his pen carefully, and now watched me from under his great beetle brows. Suddenly he rose, and, stamping on the hearth with his cork leg, exclaimed, "Look up from those cursed books, brother Austin! What is there in that lad's face? Construe *that*, if you can!"

## CHAPTER II.

And my father pushed aside his books, and rose hastily. He took off his spectacles, and rubbed them mechanically, but he said nothing; and my uncle, staring at him for a moment, in surprise at his silence, burst out,—

"Oh! I see—he has been getting into some scrape, and you are angry! Fie! young blood will have its way, Austin—it will. I don't blame that—it is only when — come here, Sisty! Zounds! man, come here."

My father gently brushed off the captain's hand, and, advancing towards me, opened his arms. The next moment I was sobbing on his breast.

"But what is the matter?" cried Captain Roland, "will nobody say what is the matter? Money, I suppose—money, you confounded extravagant young dog! Luckily you have got an uncle who has more than he knows what to do with. How much?—fifty?

—a hundred? two hundred? How can I write the cheque, if you'll not speak."

"Hush, brother! it is no money you can give that will set this right. My poor boy! have I guessed truly? Did I guess truly the other evening, when—"

"Yes, sir, yes! I have been so wretched. But I am better now—I can tell you all."

My uncle moved slowly towards the door: his fine sense of delicacy made him think that even he was out of place in the confidence between son and father.

"No, uncle," I said, holding out my hand to him, "stay; you too can advise me—strengthen me. I have kept my honour yet—help me to keep it still."

At the sound of the word honour, Captain Roland stood mute, and raised his head quickly.

So I told all—incoherently enough at first, but clearly and manfully as I went on. Now I know that it is not the custom of lovers to confide in fathers and uncles. Judging by those mirrors of life, plays and novels, they choose better;—valets and chambermaids, and friends whom they have picked up in the street, as I had picked up poor Francis Vivian—to these they make clean breasts of their troubles. But fathers and uncles—to them they are close, impregnable, "buttoned to the chin." The Caxtons were an eccentric family, and never did anything like other people.

When I had ended, I lifted my eyes, and said pleadingly, "Now, tell me, is there no hope—none?"

"Why should there be none?" cried Captain Roland hastily—"The De Caxtons are as good a family as the Trevanions; and as for yourself, all I will say is, that the young lady might choose worse for her own happiness."

I wrung my uncle's hand, and turned to my father in anxious fear—for I knew that, in spite of his secluded habits, few men ever formed a sounder judgment on worldly matters, when he was fairly drawn to look at them. A thing wonderful is that plain wisdom which scholars and poets often have for others, though they rarely deign to use it for themselves. And how on earth do they get at it? I looked at my father, and the vague hope Roland had excited fell as I looked.

"Brother," said he slowly, and shaking his head, "the world, which gives codes and laws to those who live in it, does not care much for a pedigree, unless it goes with a title-deed to estates."

"Trevanion was not richer than Pisistratus when he married Lady Ellinor," said my uncle.

"True; but Lady Ellinor was not then an heiress, and her father viewed these matters as no other peer in England perhaps would. As for Trevanion himself, I dare say he has no prejudices about station, but

he is strong in common sense. He values himself on being a practical man. It would be folly to talk to him of love, and the affections of youth. He would see in the son of Austin Caxton, living on the interest of some fifteen or sixteen thousand pounds, such a match for his daughter as no prudent man in his position could approve. And as for Lady Ellinor "—

"She owes us much, Austin!" exclaimed Roland, his face darkening.

"Lady Ellinor is now what, if we had known her better, she promised always to be—the ambitious, brilliant, scheming woman of the world. Is it not so, Pisistratus?"

I said nothing. I felt too much.

"And does the girl like you?—but I think it is clear she does!" exclaimed Roland. "Fate—fate; it has been a fatal family to us! Zounds! Austin, it was your fault. Why did you let him go there?"

"My son is now a man—at least in heart, if not in years—can man be shut from danger and trial? They found me in the old parsonage, brother!" said my father mildly.

My uncle walked, or rather stumped, three times up and down the room; and he then stopped short, folded his arms, and came to a decision—

"If the girl likes you, your duty is doubly clear—you can't take advantage of it. You have done right

to leave the house, for the temptation might be too strong."

"But what excuse shall I make to Mr Trevanion?" said I feebly—"what story can I invent? So careless as he is while he trusts, so penetrating if he once suspects, he will see through all my subterfuges, and —and—"

"It is as plain as a pike-staff," said my uncle abruptly—"and there need be no subterfuge in the matter. 'I must leave you, Mr Trevanion.' 'Why?' says he. 'Don't ask me.' He insists. 'Well then, sir, if you must know, I love your daughter. I have nothing—she is a great heiress. You will not approve of that love, and therefore I leave you!' That is the course that becomes an English gentleman—eh, Austin?"

"You are never wrong when your instincts speak, Roland," said my father. "Can you say this, Pisistratus, or shall I say it for you?"

"Let him say it himself," said Roland; "and let him judge himself of the answer. He is young, he is clever, he may make a figure in the world. Trevanion *may* answer, 'Win the lady after you have won the laurel, like the knights of old.' At all events, you will hear the worst."

"I will go," said I, firmly; and I took my hat, and left the room. As I was passing the landing-

place, a light step stole down the upper flight of stairs, and a little hand seized my own. I turned quickly, and met the full, dark, seriously sweet eyes of my cousin Blanche.

"Don't go away yet, Sisty," said she coaxingly. "I have been waiting for you, for I heard your voice, and did not like to come in and disturb you."

"And why did you wait for me, my little Blanche?"

"Why! only to see you. But your eyes are red. Oh, cousin!"—and, before I was aware of her childish impulse, she had sprung to my neck and kissed me. Now Blanche was not like most children, and was very sparing of her caresses. So it was out of the deeps of a kind heart that that kiss came. I returned it without a word; and, putting her down gently, ran down the stairs, and was in the streets. But I had not got far before I heard my father's voice; and he came up, and, hooking his arm into mine, said, "Are there not two of us that suffer?—let us be together!" I pressed his arm, and we walked on in silence. But when we were near Trevanion's house, I said hesitatingly, "Would it not be better, sir, that I went in alone. If there is to be an explanation between Mr Trevanion and myself, would it not seem as if your presence implied either a request to him that would lower us both, or a doubt of me that—"

"You will go in alone, of course: I will wait for you—"

"Not in the streets—oh, no! father," cried I, touched inexpressibly. For all this was so unlike my father's habits, that I felt remorse to have so communicated my young griefs to the calm dignity of his serene life.

"My son, you do not know how I love you. I have only known it myself lately. Look you, I am living in you now, my first-born; not in my other son —the Great Book: I must have my way. Go in; that is the door, is it not?"

I pressed my father's hand, and I felt then, that, while that hand could reply to mine, even the loss of Fanny Trevanion could not leave the world a blank. How much we have before us in life, while we retain our parents! How much to strive and to hope for! What a motive in the conquest of our sorrow—that they may not sorrow with us!

## CHAPTER III.

I ENTERED Trevanion's study. It was an hour in which he was rarely at home, but I had not thought of that; and I saw without surprise that, contrary to his custom, he was in his arm-chair, reading one of his favourite classic authors, instead of being in some committee-room of the House of Commons.

"A pretty fellow you are," said he, looking up, "to leave me all the morning, without rhyme or reason! And my committee is postponed—chairman ill—people who get ill should not go into the House of Commons. So here I am, looking into Propertius: Parr is right; not so elegant a writer as Tibullus. But what the deuce are you about?—why don't you sit down?—Humph! you look grave—you have something to say,—say it!"

And, putting down Propertius, the acute, sharp face of Trevanion instantly became earnest and attentive.

"My dear Mr Trevanion," said I, with as much

steadiness as I could assume, "you have been most kind to me; and, out of my own family, there is no man I love and respect more."

TREVANION.—Humph! What's all this! (*In an under tone*)—Am I going to be taken in?

PISISTRATUS.—Do not think me ungrateful, then, when I say I come to resign my office—to leave the house where I have been so happy.

TREVANION.—Leave the house!—Pooh!—I have overtasked you. I will be more merciful in future. You must forgive a political economist—it is the fault of my sect to look upon men as machines.

PISISTRATUS (*smiling faintly.*)—No, indeed—that is not it! I have nothing to complain of—nothing I could wish altered—could I stay.

TREVANION (*examining me thoughtfully.*) — And does your father approve of your leaving me thus?

PISISTRATUS.—Yes, fully.

TREVANION (*musing a moment.*)—I see, he would send you to the University, make you a book-worm like himself: pooh! that will not do—you will never become wholly a man of books,—it is not in you. Young man, though I may seem careless, I read characters, when I please it, pretty quickly. You do wrong to leave me; you are made for the great world —I can open to you a high career. I wish to do so!

Lady Ellinor wishes it—nay, insists on it—for your father's sake as well as yours. I never ask a favour from ministers, and I never will. But (here Trevanion rose suddenly, and, with an erect mien and a quick gesture of his arm, he added)—but a minister himself can dispose as he pleases of his patronage. Look you, it is a secret yet, and I trust to your honour. But, before the year is out, I must be in the cabinet. Stay with me, I guarantee your fortunes—three months ago I would not have said that. By-and-by I will open parliament for you—you are not of age yet—work till then. And now sit down and write my letters—a sad arrear!"

"My dear, dear Mr Trevanion!" said I, so affected that I could scarcely speak, and seizing his hand, which I pressed between both mine—"I dare not thank you—I cannot! But you don't know my heart—it is not ambition. No! if I could but stay here on the same terms for ever—*here*"—looking ruefully on that spot where Fanny had stood the night before. "But it is impossible! If you knew all, you would be the first to bid me go!"

"You are in debt," said the man of the world, coldly. "Bad, very bad—still—"

"No, sir; no! worse—"

"Hardly possible to be worse, young man—hardly! But, just as you will; you leave me, and will not say

why. Good-by. Why do you linger? shake hands, and go!"

"I cannot leave you thus: I—I—sir, the truth shall out. I am rash and mad enough not to see Miss Trevanion without forgetting that I am poor, and—"

"Ha!" interrupted Trevanion softly, and growing pale, "this is a misfortune indeed! And I, who talked of reading characters! Truly, truly, we would-be practical men are fools—fools! And you have made love to my daughter!"

"Sir! Mr Trevanion!—no—never, never so base! In your house, trusted by you,—how could you think it? I dared, it may be, to love—at all events, to feel that I could not be insensible to a temptation too strong for me. But to say it to your daughter—to ask love in return—I would as soon have broken open your desk! Frankly I tell you my folly: it is a folly, not a disgrace."

Trevanion came up to me abruptly, as I leant against the book-case, and, grasping my hand with a cordial kindness, said,—"Pardon me! You have behaved as your father's son should—I envy him such a son! Now, listen to me—I cannot give you my daughter—"

"Believe me, sir, I never—"

"Tut, listen! I cannot give you my daughter. I say nothing of inequality—all gentlemen are equal;

and if not, all impertinent affectation of superiority, in such a case, would come ill from one who owes his own fortune to his wife! But, as it is, I have a stake in the world, won not by fortune only, but the labour of a life, the suppression of half my nature—the drudging, squaring, taming down all that made the glory and joy of my youth—to be that hard matter-of-fact thing which the English world expect in a—*statesman!* This station has gradually opened into its natural result—power! I tell you I shall soon have high office in the administration: I hope to render great services to England—for we English politicians, whatever the mob and the press say of us, are not selfish place-hunters. I refused office, as high as I look for now, ten years ago. We believe in our opinions, and we hail the power that may carry them into effect. In this cabinet I shall have enemies. Oh, don't think we leave jealousy behind us, at the doors of Downing Street! I shall be one of a minority. I know well what must happen: like all men in power, I must strengthen myself by other heads and hands than my own. My daughter should bring to me the alliance of that house in England which is most necessary to me. My life falls to the ground, like a child's pyramid of cards, if I waste—I do not say on you, but on men of ten times your fortune (whatever that be,)—the means of strength which are at my dis-

posal in the hand of Fanny Trevanion. To this end I have looked; but to this end her mother has schemed —for these household matters are within a man's hopes, but belong to a woman's policy. So much for us. But to you, my dear, and frank, and high-souled young friend—to you, if I were not Fanny's father —if I were your nearest relation, and Fanny could be had for the asking, with all her princely dower, (for it is princely,)—to you I should say, fly from a load upon the heart, on the genius, the energy, the pride, and the spirit, which not one man in ten thousand can bear; fly from the curse of owing everything to a wife!—it is a reversal of all natural position, it is a blow to all the manhood within us. You know not what it is: I do! My wife's fortune came not till after marriage—so far, so well; it saved my reputation from the charge of fortune-hunting. But, I tell you fairly, that if it had never come at all, I should be a prouder, and a greater, and a happier man than I have ever been, or ever can be, with all its advantages; it has been a millstone round my neck. And yet Ellinor has never breathed a word that could wound my pride. Would her daughter be as forbearing? Much as I love Fanny, I doubt if she has the great heart of her mother. You look incredulous;—naturally. Oh, you think I shall sacrifice my child's happiness to a politician's ambition. Folly of youth!

Fanny would be wretched with you. She might not think so now; she would five years hence! Fanny will make an admirable duchess, countess, great lady; but wife to a man who owes all to her!—no, no, don't dream it! I shall not sacrifice her happiness, depend on it. I speak plainly, as man to man—man of the world to a man just entering it—but still man to man! What say you?"

"I will think over all you tell me. I know that you are speaking to me most generously—as a father would. Now let me go, and may God keep you and yours!"

"Go—I return your blessing—go! I don't insult you now with offers of service; but, remember, you have a right to command them—in all ways, in all times. Stop!—take this comfort away with you—a sorry comfort now, a great one hereafter. In a position that might have moved anger, scorn, pity, you have made a barren-hearted man honour and admire you. You, a boy, have made me, with my gray hairs, think better of the whole world: tell your father that."

I closed the door, and stole out softly—softly. But when I got into the hall, Fanny suddenly opened the door of the breakfast parlour, and seemed, by her look, her gesture, to invite me in. Her face was very pale, and there were traces of tears on the heavy lids.

I stood still a moment, and my heart beat violently. I then muttered something inarticulately, and, bowing low, hastened to the door.

I thought, but my ears might deceive me, that I heard my name pronounced; but fortunately the tall porter started from his newspaper and his leather chair, and the entrance stood open. I joined my father.

"It is all over," said I, with a resolute smile. "And now, my dear father, I feel how grateful I should be for all that your lessons—your life—have taught me;—for, believe me, I am not unhappy."

## CHAPTER IV.

We came back to my father's house, and on the stairs we met my mother, whom Roland's grave looks, and her Austin's strange absence, had alarmed. My father quietly led the way to a little room, which my mother had appropriated to Blanche and herself; and then, placing my hand in that which had helped his own steps from the stony path, down the quiet vales of life, he said to me,—"Nature gives you here the soother;" and, so saying, he left the room.

And it was true, O my mother! that in thy simple loving breast nature did place the deep wells of comfort! We come to men for philosophy—to women for consolation. And the thousand weaknesses and regrets—the sharp sands of the minutiæ that make up *sorrow*—all these, which I could have betrayed to no *man*—not even to him, the dearest and tenderest of all men—I showed without shame to thee! And thy tears, that fell on my cheek, had the balm of

Araby; and my heart, at length, lay lulled and soothed under thy moist gentle eyes.

I made an effort, and joined the little circle at dinner; and I felt grateful that no violent attempt was made to raise my spirits—nothing but affection, more subdued, and soft, and tranquil. Even little Blanche, as if by the intuition of sympathy, ceased her babble, and seemed to hush her footstep as she crept to my side. But after dinner, when we had reassembled in the drawing-room, and the lights shone bright, and the curtains were let down—and only the quick roll of some passing wheels reminded us that there was a world without—my father began to talk. He had laid aside all his work; the younger but less perishable child was forgotten,—and my father began to talk.

"It is," said he musingly, "a well-known thing, that particular drugs or herbs suit the body according to its particular diseases. When we are ill, we don't open our medicine-chest at random, and take out any powder or phial that comes to hand. The skilful doctor is he who adjusts the dose to the malady."

"Of that there can be no doubt," quoth Captain Roland. "I remember a notable instance of the justice of what you say. When I was in Spain, both my horse and I fell ill at the same time; a dose was sent for each; and, by some infernal mistake, I swal-

lowed the horse's physic, and the horse, poor thing, swallowed mine!"

"And what was the result?" asked my father.

"The horse died!" answered Roland mournfully —"a valuable beast—bright bay, with a star!"

"And you?"

"Why, the doctor said it ought to have killed me: but it took a great deal more than a paltry bottle of physic to kill a man in my regiment."

"Nevertheless, we arrive at the same conclusion," pursued my father,—"I with my theory, you with your experience,—that the physic we take must not be chosen hap-hazard; and that a mistake in the bottle may kill a horse. But when we come to the medicine for the mind, how little do we think of the golden rule which common-sense applies to the body!"

"Anan," said the Captain, "what medicine is there for the mind? Shakspeare has said something on that subject, which, if I recollect right, implies that there is no ministering to a mind diseased."

"I think not, brother; he only said physic (meaning boluses and black draughts) would not do it. And Shakspeare was the last man to find fault with his own art; for, verily, he has been a great physician to the mind."

"Ah! I take you now, brother,—books again! So you think that, when a man breaks his heart, or

loses his fortune, or his daughter—(Blanche, child, come here)—that you have only to clap a plaster of print on the sore place, and all is well. I wish you would find me such a cure."

"Will you try it?"

"If it is not Greek," said my uncle.

## CHAPTER V.

### MY FATHER'S CROTCHET ON THE HYGEIENIC CHEMISTRY OF BOOKS.

"IF," said my father—and here his hand was deep in his waistcoat—"if we accept the authority of Diodorus, as to the inscription on the great Egyptian library—and I don't see why Diodorus should not be as near the mark as any one else?" added my father interrogatively, turning round.

My mother thought herself the person addressed, and nodded her gracious assent to the authority of Diodorus. His opinion thus fortified, my father continued,—"If, I say, we accept the authority of Diodorus, the inscription on the Egyptian library was—'The Medicine of the Mind.' Now, that phrase has become notoriously trite and hackneyed, and people repeat vaguely that books are the medicine of the mind. Yes; but to apply the medicine is the thing!"

"So you have told us at least twice before, brother," quoth the Captain, bluffly. "And what Diodorus has to do with it, I know no more than the man of the moon."

"I shall never get on at this rate," said my father, in a tone between reproach and entreaty.

"Be good children, Roland and Blanche both," said my mother, stopping from her work, and holding up her needle threateningly—and indeed inflicting a slight puncture upon the Captain's shoulder.

"Rem *acu* tetigisti, my dear," said my father, borrowing Cicero's pun on the occasion.* "And now we shall go upon velvet. I say, then, that books, taken indiscriminately, are no cure to the diseases and afflictions of the mind. There is a world of science necessary in the taking them. I have known some people in great sorrow fly to a novel, or the last light book in fashion. One might as well take a rose-draught for the plague! Light reading does not do when the heart is really heavy. I am told that Goethe, when he lost his son, took to study a science that was new to him. Ah! Goethe was a physician who knew what he was about. In a great grief like that, you cannot tickle and divert the mind; you must wrench it away, abstract, absorb—bury it

* Cicero's joke on a senator who was the son of a tailor—"Thou hast touched the thing sharply," (or with a needle—*acu*.)

in an abyss, hurry it into a labyrinth. Therefore, for the irremediable sorrows of middle life and old age, I recommend a strict chronic course of science and hard reasoning—Counter-irritation. Bring the brain to act upon the heart! If science is too much against the grain, (for we have not all got mathematical heads,) something in the reach of the humblest understanding, but sufficiently searching to the highest—a new language—Greek, Arabic, Scandinavian, Chinese, or Welch! For the loss of fortune, the dose should be applied less directly to the understanding.—I would administer something elegant and cordial. For as the heart is crushed and lacerated by a loss in the affections, so it is rather the head that aches and suffers by the loss of money. Here we find the higher class of poets a very valuable remedy. For observe that poets of the grander and more comprehensive kind of genius have in them two separate men, quite distinct from each other—the imaginative man, and the practical, circumstantial man; and it is the happy mixture of these that suits diseases of the mind, half imaginative and half practical. There is Homer, now lost with the gods, now at home with the homeliest, the very 'poet of circumstance,' as Gray has finely called him; and yet with imagination enough to seduce and coax the dullest into forgetting, for a while, that little spot on his

desk which his banker's book can cover. There is Virgil, far below him, indeed—

> 'Virgil the wise,
> Whose verse walks highest, but not flies,'

as Cowley expresses it. But Virgil still has genius enough to be two men—to lead you into the fields, not only to listen to the pastoral reed, and to hear the bees hum, but to note how you can make the most of the glebe and the vineyard. There is Horace, charming man of the world, who will condole with you feelingly on the loss of your fortune, and by no means undervalue the good things of this life; but who will yet show you that a man may be happy with a *vile modicum*, or *parva rura*. There is Shakspeare, who, above all poets, is the mysterious dual of hard sense and empyreal fancy—and a great many more, whom I need not name; but who, if you take to them gently and quietly, will not, like your mere philosopher, your unreasonable stoic, tell you that you have lost nothing; but who will insensibly steal you out of this world, with its losses and crosses, and slip you into another world, before you know where you are!—a world where you are just as welcome, though you carry no more earth of your lost acres with you than covers the sole of your shoe. Then, for hypochondria and satiety, what is better than a brisk alterative course of travels—especially early,

out of the way, marvellous, legendary travels! How they freshen up the spirits! How they take you out of the humdrum yawning state you are in. See, with Herodotus, young Greece spring up into life; or note with him how already the wondrous old Orient world is crumbling into giant decay; or go with Carpini and Rubruquis to Tartary, meet 'the carts of Zagathai laden with houses, and think that a great city is travelling towards you.' * Gaze on that vast wild empire of the Tartar, where the descendants of Jenghis 'multiply and disperse over the immense waste desert, which is as boundless as the ocean.' Sail with the early northern discoverers, and penetrate to the heart of winter, among sea-serpents and bears, and tusked morses, with the faces of men. Then, what think you of Columbus, and the stern soul of Cortes, and the kingdom of Mexico, and the strange gold city of the Peruvians, with that audacious brute Pizarro? and the Polynesians, just for all the world like the ancient Britons? and the American Indians, and the South-Sea Islanders? how petulant, and young, and adventurous, and frisky your hypochondriac must get upon a regimen like that! Then, for that vice of the mind which I call sectarianism—not in the religious sense of the word, but little, narrow prejudices, that make you hate your

* Rubriquis, sect. xii.

next-door neighbour, because he has his eggs roasted when you have yours boiled; and gossiping and prying into people's affairs, and backbiting, and thinking heaven and earth are coming together, if some broom touch a cobweb that you have let grow over the window-sill of your brains—what like a large and generous, mildly aperient (I beg your pardon, my dear) course of history! How it clears away all the fumes of the head!—better than the hellebore with which the old leeches of the middle ages purged the cerebellum. There, amidst all that great whirl and *sturmbad*, (storm-bath,) as the Germans say, of kingdoms and empires, and races and ages, how your mind enlarges beyond that little, feverish animosity to John Styles; or that unfortunate prepossession of yours, that all the world is interested in your grievances against Tom Stokes and his wife!

"I can only touch, you see, on a few ingredients in this magnificent pharmacy — its resources are boundless, but require the nicest discretion. I remember to have cured a disconsolate widower, who obstinately refused every other medicament, by a strict course of geology. I dipped him deep into gneiss and mica schist. Amidst the first strata, I suffered the watery action to expend itself upon cooling crystallised masses; and, by the time I had got him into the tertiary period, amongst the transition

chalks of Maestricht, and the conchiferous marls of Gosau, he was ready for a new wife. Kitty, my dear! it is no laughing matter. I made no less notable a cure of a young scholar at Cambridge, who was meant for the church, when he suddenly caught a cold fit of freethinking, with great shiverings, from wading over his depth in Spinosa. None of the divines, whom I first tried, did him the least good in that state; so I turned over a new leaf, and doctored him gently upon the chapters of faith in Abraham Tucker's book, (you should read it, Sisty;) then I threw in strong doses of Fichté; after that I put him on the Scotch metaphysicians, with plunge-baths into certain German transcendentalists; and having convinced him that faith is not an unphilosophical state of mind, and that he might believe without compromising his understanding—for he was mightily conceited on that score—I threw in my divines, which he was now fit to digest; and his theological constitution, since then, has become so robust, that he has eaten up two livings and a deanery! In fact, I have a plan for a library that, instead of heading its compartments, 'Philology, Natural Science, Poetry,' &c., one shall head them according to the diseases for which they are severally good, bodily and mental—up from a dire calamity, or the pangs of the gout, down to a fit of the spleen, or a slight catarrh; for which

last your light reading comes in with a whey-posset and barley-water. But," continued my father more gravely, "when some one sorrow, that is yet reparable, gets hold of your mind like a monomania—when you think, because heaven has denied you this or that, on which you had set your heart, that all your life must be a blank—oh! then diet yourself well on biography—the biography of good and great men. See how little a space one sorrow really makes in life. See scarce a page, perhaps, given to some grief similar to your own; and how triumphantly the life sails on beyond it! You thought the wing was broken!—Tut—tut—it was but a bruised feather! See what life leaves behind it when all is done!—a summary of positive facts far out of the region of sorrow and suffering, linking themselves with the being of the world. Yes, biography is the medicine here! Roland, you said you would try my prescription—here it is,"—and my father took up a book, and reached it to the Captain.

My uncle looked over it—*Life of the Reverend Robert Hall.* "Brother, he was a Dissenter, and, thank heaven! I am a church-and-state man, back and bone!"

"Robert Hall was a brave man, and a true soldier under the great commander," said my father artfully."

The Captain mechanically carried his forefinger to his forehead in military fashion, and saluted the book respectfully.

"I have another copy for you, Pisistratus—that is mine which I have lent Roland. This, which I bought for you to-day, you will keep."

"Thank you, sir," said I listlessly, not seeing what great good the *Life of Robert Hall* could do me, or why the same medicine should suit the old weather-beaten uncle, and the nephew yet in his teens.

"I have said nothing," resumed my father, slightly bowing his broad temples, "of the Book of Books, for that is the *lignum vitæ*, the cardinal medicine for all. These are but the subsidiaries: for, as you may remember, my dear Kitty, that I have said before—we can never keep the system quite right unless we place just in the centre of the great ganglionic system, whence the nerves carry its influence gently and smoothly through the whole frame—THE SAFFRON BAG!"

## CHAPTER VI.

AFTER breakfast the next morning, I took my hat to go out, when my father, looking at me, and seeing by my countenance that I had not slept, said gently—

"My dear Pisistratus, you have not tried my medicine yet."

"What medicine, sir?"

"Robert Hall."

"No, indeed, not yet," said I, smiling.

"Do so, my son, before you go out; depend on it, you will enjoy your walk more."

I confess that it was with some reluctance I obeyed. I went back to my own room, and sate resolutely down to my task. Are there any of you, my readers, who have not read the *Life of Robert Hall?* If so, in the words of the great Captain Cuttle, "When found, make a note of it." Never mind what your theological opinion is—Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Baptist,

Pædobaptist, Independent, Quaker, Unitarian, Philosopher, Freethinker,—send for Robert Hall! Yea, if there exist yet on earth, descendants of the arch-heresies, which made such a noise in their day—men who believe with Saturninus that the world was made by seven angels; or with Basilides, that there are as many heavens as there are days in the year; or with the Nicolaitanes, that men ought to have their wives in common, (plenty of that sect still, especially in the Red Republic;) or with their successors, the Gnostics, who believed in Jaldaboath; or with the Carpacratians, that the world was made by the devil; or with the Cerinthians, and Ebionites, and Nazarites, (which last discovered that the name of Noah's wife was Ouria, and that she set the ark on fire;) or with the Valentinians, who taught that there were thirty Æones, ages, or worlds, born out of Profundity, (Bathos,) male, and Silence, female; or with the Marcites, Colarbasii, and Heracleonites, (who still kept up that bother about Æones, Mr Profundity, and Mrs Silence;) or with the Ophites, who are said to have worshipped the serpent; or the Cainites, who ingeniously found out a reason for honouring Judas, because he foresaw what good would come to men by betraying our Saviour; or with the Sethites, who made Seth a part of the Divine substance; or with the Archonticks, Ascothyptæ, Cerdonians, Marcionites,

the disciples of Apelles, and Severus, (the last was a teetotaller, and said wine was begot by Satan!) or of Tatian, who thought all the descendants of Adam were irretrievably damned except themselves, (some of those Tatiani are certainly extant!) or the Cataphrygians, who were also called Tascodragitæ, because they thrust their forefingers up their nostrils to show their devotion; or the Pepuzians, Quintilians, and Artotyrites; or—but no matter. If I go through all the follies of men in search of the truth, I shall never get to the end of my chapter, or back to Robert Hall: whatever, then, thou art, orthodox or heterodox, send for the *Life of Robert Hall.* It is the life of a man that it does good to manhood itself to contemplate.

I had finished the biography, which is not long, and was musing over it, when I heard the Captain's cork-leg upon the stairs. I opened the door for him, and he entered, book in hand, as I, also book in hand, stood ready to receive him.

"Well, sir," said Roland, seating himself, "has the prescription done you any good?"

"Yes, uncle—great."

"And me too. By Jupiter, Sisty, that same Hall was a fine fellow! I wonder if the medicine has gone through the same channels in both? Tell me, first, how it has affected you."

"*Imprimis*, then, my dear uncle, I fancy that a book like this must do good to all who live in the world in the ordinary manner, by admitting us into a circle of life of which I suspect we think but little. Here is a man connecting himself directly with a heavenly purpose, and cultivating considerable faculties to that one end; seeking to accomplish his soul as far as he can, that he may do most good on earth, and take a higher existence up to heaven; a man intent upon a sublime and spiritual duty: in short, living as it were in it, and so filled with the consciousness of immortality, and so strong in the link between God and man, that, without any affected stoicism, without being insensible to pain—rather, perhaps, from a nervous temperament, acutely feeling it—he yet has a happiness wholly independent of it. It is impossible not to be thrilled with an admiration that elevates while it awes you, in reading that solemn 'Dedication of himself to God.' This offering of 'soul and body, time, health, reputation, talents,' to the divine and invisible Principle of Good, calls us suddenly to contemplate the selfishness of our own views and hopes, and awakens us from the egotism that exacts all and resigns nothing.

"But this book has mostly struck upon the chord in my own heart, in that characteristic which my father indicated as belonging to all biography. Here is a life

of remarkable *fulness*, great study, great thought, and great action; and yet," said I, colouring, "how small a place those feelings, which have tyrannised over me, and made all else seem blank and void, hold in that life. It is not as if the man were a cold and hard ascetic; it is easy to see in him not only remarkable tenderness and warm affections, but strong self-will, and the passion of all vigorous natures. Yes! I understand better now what existence in a true man should be."

"All that is very well said," quoth the Captain, "but it did not strike me. What I have seen in this book is courage. Here is a poor creature rolling on the carpet with agony; from childhood to death tortured by a mysterious incurable malady—a malady that is described as 'an internal apparatus of torture;' and who does, by his heroism, more than *bear* it—he puts it out of power to affect him; and though (here is the passage) 'his appointment by day and by night was incessant pain, yet high enjoyment was, notwithstanding, the law of his existence.' Robert Hall reads me a lesson—me, an old soldier, who thought myself above taking lessons—in courage, at least. And, as I came to that passage when, in the sharp paroxysms before death, he says, 'I have not complained, have I, sir?—and I won't complain!'—when I came to that passage I started up, and cried, 'Roland de Caxton,

thou hast been a coward! and, an thou hadst had thy deserts, thou hadst been cashiered, broken, and drummed out of the regiment long ago!'"

"After all, then, my father was not so wrong—he placed his guns right, and fired a good shot."

"He must have been from 6° to 9° above the crest of the parapet," said my uncle, thoughtfully—"which, I take it, is the best elevation, both for shot and shells, in enfilading a work."

"What say you, then, Captain?—up with our knapsacks, and on with the march!"

"Right about—face!" cried my uncle, as erect as a column.

"No looking back, if we can help it."

"Full in the front of the enemy.—'Up, guards, and at 'em!'"

"'England expects every man to do his duty!'"

"Cypress or laurel!" Cried my uncle, waving the book over his head.

## CHAPTER VII.

I WENT out—and to see Francis Vivian; for, on leaving Mr Trevanion, I was not without anxiety for my new friend's future provision. But Vivian was from home, and I strolled from his lodgings, into the suburbs on the other side of the river, and began to meditate seriously on the best course now to pursue. In quitting my present occupations, I resigned prospects far more brilliant, and fortunes far more rapid than I could ever hope to realise in any other entrance into life. But I felt the necessity, if I desired to keep steadfast to that more healthful frame of mind I had obtained, of some manly and continuous labour—some earnest employment. My thoughts flew back to the university; and the quiet of its cloisters—which, until I had been blinded by the glare of the London world, and grief had somewhat dulled the edge of my quick desires and hopes, had seemed to me cheerless and unaltering—took an inviting aspect. They presented

what I needed most—a new scene, a new arena, a partial return into boyhood; repose for passions prematurely raised; activity for the reasoning powers in fresh directions. I had not lost my time in London: I had kept up, if not studies purely classical, at least the habits of application; I had sharpened my general comprehension, and augmented my resources. Accordingly, when I returned home, I resolved to speak to my father. But I found he had forestalled me; and, on entering, my mother drew me up stairs into her room, with a smile kindled by my smile, and told me that she and her Austin had been thinking that it was best that I should leave London as soon as possible; that my father found he could now dispense with the library of the Museum for some months; that the time for which they had taken their lodgings would be up in a few days; that the summer was far advanced, town odious, the country beautiful—in a word, we were to go home. There I could prepare myself for Cambridge, till the long vacation was over; and, my mother added hesitatingly, and with a prefatory caution to spare my health, that my father, whose income could ill afford the requisite allowance to me, counted on my soon lightening his burden, by getting a scholarship. I felt how much provident kindness there was in all this—even in that hint of a scholarship, which was meant to rouse my faculties,

and spur me, by affectionate incentives, to a new ambition. I was not less delighted than grateful.

"But poor Roland," said I, "and little Blanche—will they come with us?"

"I fear not," said my mother, "for Roland is anxious to get back to his tower; and, in a day or two, he will be well enough to move."

"Do you not think, my dear mother, that, somehow or other, this lost son of his had something to do with Roland's illness—that the illness was as much mental as physical?"

"I have no doubt of it, Sisty. What a sad, bad heart that young man must have!"

"My uncle seems to have abandoned all hope of finding him in London; otherwise, ill as he has been, I am sure we could not have kept him at home. So he goes back to the old tower. Poor man, he must be dull enough there!—we must contrive to pay him a visit. Does Blanche ever speak of her brother?"

"No, for it seems they were not brought up much together—at all events, she does not remember him. How lovely she is! Her mother must surely have been very handsome."

"She is a pretty child, certainly, though in a strange style of beauty—such immense eyes!—and affectionate, and loves Roland as she ought."

And here the conversation dropped.

Our plans being thus decided, it was necessary that I should lose no time in seeing Vivian, and making some arrangement for the future. His manner had lost so much of its abruptness, that I thought I could venture to recommend him personally to Trevanion; and I knew, after what had passed, that Trevanion would make a point to oblige me. I resolved to consult my father about it. As yet I had either never found, or never made the opportunity to talk to my father on the subject, he had been so occupied; and, if he had proposed to see my new friend, what answer could I have made, in the teeth of Vivian's cynic objections? However, as we were now going away, that last consideration ceased to be of importance; and, for the first, the student had not yet entirely settled back to his books. I therefore watched the time when my father walked down to the Museum, and, slipping my arm in his, I told him, briefly and rapidly, as we went along, how I had formed this strange acquaintance, and how I was now situated. The story did not interest my father quite as much as I expected, and he did not understand all the complexities of Vivian's character—how could he?—for he answered briefly, "I should think that, for a young man, apparently without a sixpence, and whose education seems so imperfect, any resource in Trevanion must be most temporary and uncertain. Speak to

your uncle Jack—he can find him some place, I have no doubt—perhaps a readership in a printer's office, or a reporter's place on some journal, if he is fit for it. But if you want to steady him, let it be something regular."

Therewith my father dismissed the matter, and vanished through the gates of the Museum.—Readership to a printer, reportership on a journal, for a young gentleman with the high notions and arrogant vanity of Francis Vivian—his ambition already soaring far beyond kid gloves and a cabriolet! The idea was hopeless; and, perplexed and doubtful, I took my way to Vivian's lodgings. I found him at home, and unemployed, standing by his window, with folded arms, and in a state of such reverie that he was not aware of my entrance till I had touched him on the shoulder.

"Ha!" said he then, with one of his short, quick, impatient sighs, "I thought you had given me up, and forgotten me—but you look pale and harassed. I could almost think you had grown thinner within the last few days."

"Oh! never mind me, Vivian: I have come to speak of yourself. I have left Trevanion; it is settled that I should go to the university—and we all quit town in a few days."

"In a few days!—all!—who are all?"

"My family—father, mother, uncle, cousin, and myself. But, my dear fellow, now let us think seriously what is best to be done for you. I can present you to Trevanion."

"Ha!"

"But Trevanion is a hard, though an excellent man; and, moreover, as he is always changing the subjects that engross him, in a month or so, he may have nothing to give you. You said you would work—will you consent not to complain if the work cannot be done in kid gloves? Young men who have risen high in the world have begun, it is well known, as reporters to the press. It is a situation of respectability, and in request, and not easy to obtain, I fancy; but still—"

Vivian interrupted me hastily—

"Thank you a thousand times! but what you say confirms a resolution I had taken before you came. I shall make it up with my family, and return home."

"Oh! I am so really glad. How wise in you!"

Vivian turned away his head abruptly—

"Your pictures of family life and domestic peace, you see," he said, "seduced me more than you thought. When do you leave town?"

"Why, I believe, early next week."

"So soon," said Vivian, thoughtfully. "Well, perhaps I may ask you yet to introduce me to Mr

Trevanion; for—who knows?—my family and I may fall out again. But I will consider. I think I have heard you say that this Trevanion is a very old friend of your father's, or uncle's?"

"He, or rather Lady Ellinor, is an old friend of both."

"And therefore would listen to your recommendations of me. But perhaps I may not need them. So you have left—left of your own accord—a situation that seemed more enjoyable, I should think, than rooms in a college;—left—why did you leave?"

And Vivian fixed his bright eyes, full and piercingly, on mine.

"It was only for a time, for a trial, that I was there," said I, evasively: "out at nurse, as it were, till the Alma Mater opened her arms—*alma* indeed she ought to be to my father's son."

Vivian looked unsatisfied with my explanation, but did not question me farther. He himself was the first to turn the conversation, and he did this with more affectionate cordiality than was common to him. He inquired into our general plans, into the probabilities of our return to town, and drew from me a description of our rural Tusculum. He was quiet and subdued; and once or twice I thought there was a moisture in those luminous eyes. We parted with more of the unreserve and fondness of youthful

friendship—at least on my part, and seemingly on his—than had yet endeared our singular intimacy; for the cement of cordial attachment had been wanting to an intercourse in which one party refused all confidence, and the other mingled distrust and fear with keen interest and compassionate admiration.

That evening, before lights were brought in, my father, turning to me, abruptly asked if I had seen my friend, and what he was about to do.

"He thinks of returning to his family," said I.

Roland, who had seemed dozing, winced uneasily.

"Who returns to his family?" asked the Captain.

"Why, you must know," said my father, "that Sisty has fished up a friend of whom he can give no account that would satisfy a policeman, and whose fortunes he thinks himself under the necessity of protecting. You are very lucky that he has not picked your pockets, Sisty; but I daresay he has? What's his name?"

"Vivian," said I—"Francis Vivian."

"A good name, and a Cornish," said my father. "Some derive it from the Romans — Vivianus; others from a Celtic word, which means"—

"Vivian!" interrupted Roland — "Vivian! — I wonder if it be the son of Colonel Vivian?"

"He is certainly a gentleman's son," said I; "but he never told me what his family and connexions were."

"Vivian," repeated my uncle—"poor Colonel Vivian! So the young man is going to his father. I have no doubt it is the same. Ah!"—

"What do you know of Colonel Vivian, or his son?" said I. "Pray, tell me, I am so interested in this young man."

"I know nothing of either, except by gossip," said my uncle, moodily. "I did hear that Colonel Vivian, an excellent officer and honourable man, had been in—in—(Roland's voice faltered)—in great grief about his son, whom, a mere boy, he had prevented from some improper marriage, and who had run away and left him—it was supposed for America. The story affected me at the time," added my uncle, trying to speak calmly.

We were all silent, for we felt why Roland was so disturbed, and why Colonel Vivian's grief should have touched him home. Similarity in affliction makes us brothers even to the unknown.

"You say he is going home to his family—I am heartily glad of it!" said the envying old soldier, gallantly.

The lights came in then, and, two minutes after, uncle Roland and I were nestled close to each other,

side by side; and I was reading over his shoulder, and his finger was silently resting on that passage that had so struck him—"I have not complained—have I, sir? —and I won't complain!"

# PART TENTH.

# PART TENTH.

## CHAPTER I.

My uncle's conjecture as to the parentage of Francis Vivian seemed to me a positive discovery. Nothing more likely than that this wilful boy had formed some headstrong attachment which no father would sanction, and so, thwarted and irritated, thrown himself on the world. Such an explanation was the more agreeable to me, as it cleared up all that had appeared more discreditable in the mystery that surrounded Vivian. I could never bear to think that he had done anything mean and criminal, however I might believe he had been rash and faulty. It was natural that the unfriended wanderer should have been thrown into a society, the equivocal character of which had failed to revolt the audacity of an inquisitive mind and adven-

turous temper; but it was natural, also, that the habits of gentle birth, and that silent education which English gentlemen commonly receive from their very cradle, should have preserved his honour, at least, intact through all. Certainly the pride, the notions, the very faults of the wellborn had remained in full force —why not the better qualities, however smothered for the time? I felt thankful for the thought that Vivian was returning to an element in which he might repurify his mind,—refit himself for that sphere to which he belonged;—thankful that we might yet meet, and our present half intimacy mature, perhaps, into healthful friendship.

It was with such thoughts that I took up my hat the next morning to seek Vivian, and judge if we had gained the right clue, when we were startled by what was a rare sound at our door—the postman's knock. My father was at the Museum; my mother in high conference, or close preparation for our approaching departure, with Mrs Primmins; Roland, I, and Blanche had the room to ourselves.

"The letter is not for me," said Pisistratus.

"Nor for me, I am sure," said the Captain, when the servant entered and confuted him—for the letter was for him. He took it up wonderingly and suspiciously, as Glumdalclitch took up Gulliver, or as (if naturalists) we take up an unknown creature, that we

are not quite sure will not bite and sting us. Ah! it has stung or bit you, Captain Roland! for you start and change colour—you suppress a cry as you break the seal—you breathe hard as you read—and the letter seems short—but it takes time in the reading, for you go over it again and again. Then you fold it up—crumple it—thrust it into your breast pocket—and look round like a man waking from a dream. Is it a dream of pain, or of pleasure? Verily, I cannot guess, for nothing is on that eagle face either of pain or pleasure, but rather of fear, agitation, bewilderment. Yet the eyes are bright, too, and there is a smile on that iron lip.

My uncle looked round, I say, and called hastily for his cane and his hat, and then began buttoning his coat across his broad breast, though the day was hot enough to have unbuttoned every breast in the tropics.

"You are not going out, uncle?"

"Yes, yes."

"But are you strong enough yet? Let me go with you?"

"No, sir; no. Blanche, come here." He took the child in his arms, surveyed her wistfully, and kissed her. "You have never given me pain, Blanche: say, 'God bless and prosper you, father!'"

"God bless and prosper my dear, dear papa!"

said Blanche, putting her little hands together, as if in prayer.

"There—that should bring me luck, Blanche," said the Captain, gaily, and setting her down. Then seizing his cane from the servant, and putting on his hat with a determined air, he walked stoutly forth; and I saw him, from the window, march along the streets as cheerfully as if he had been besieging Badajoz.

"God prosper thee, too!" said I, involuntarily.

And Blanche took hold of my hand, and said in her prettiest way, (and her pretty ways were many,) "I wish you would come with us, cousin Sisty, and help me to love papa. Poor papa! he wants us both—he wants all the love we can give him!"

"That he does, my dear Blanche; and I think it a great mistake that we don't all live together. Your papa ought not to go to that tower of his, at the world's end, but come to our snug, pretty house, with a garden full of flowers, for you to be Queen of the May—from May to November;—to say nothing of a duck that is more sagacious than any creature in the Fables I gave you the other day."

Blanche laughed and clapped her hands—"Oh, that would be so nice! But,"—and she stopped gravely, and added, "but then, you see, there would not be the tower to love papa; and I am sure

that the tower must love him very much, for he loves it dearly."

It was my turn to laugh now. "I see how it is, you little witch!" said I; "you would coax us to come and live with you and the owls! With all my heart, so far as I am concerned."

"Sisty," said Blanche, with an appalling solemnity on her face, "do you know what I've been thinking?"

"Not I, miss—what?—something very deep, I can see—very horrible, indeed, I fear, you look so serious."

"Why, I've been thinking," continued Blanche, not relaxing a muscle, and without the least bit of a blush—"I've been thinking that I'll be your little wife; and then, of course, we shall all live together."

Blanche did not blush, but I did. "Ask me that ten years hence, if you dare, you impudent little thing; and now, run away to Mrs Primmins, and tell her to keep you out of mischief, for I must say good-morning."

But Blanche did not run away, and her dignity seemed exceedingly hurt at my mode of taking her alarming proposition, for she retired into a corner pouting, and sat down with great majesty. So there I left her, and went my way to Vivian. He was out; but, seeing books on his table, and having nothing to do, I resolved to wait for his return. I had enough

of my father in me to turn at once to the books for company; and, by the side of some graver works which I had recommended, I found certain novels in French, that Vivian had got from a circulating library. I had a curiosity to read these—for, except the old classic novels of France, this mighty branch of its popular literature was then new to me. I soon got interested, but what an interest!—the interest that a nightmare might excite, if one caught it out of one's sleep, and set to work to examine it. By the side of what dazzling shrewdness, what deep knowledge of those holes and corners in the human system, of which Goethe must have spoken when he said somewhere—(if I recollect right, and don't misquote him, which I'll not answer for)—"There is something in every man's heart which, if we could know, would make us hate him,"—by the side of all this, and of much more that showed prodigious boldness and energy of intellect, what strange exaggeration—what mock nobility of sentiment—what inconceivable perversion of reasoning—what damnable demoralisation! The true artist, whether in Romance or the Drama, will often necessarily interest us in a vicious or criminal character—but he does not the less leave clear to our reprobation the vice or the crime. But here I found myself called upon not only to feel interest in the villain (which would be perfectly allowable,—I am very much

interested in Macbeth and Lovelace,)—but to admire and sympathise with the villany itself. Nor was it the confusion of all wrong and right in individual character that shocked me the most—but rather the view of society altogether, painted in colours so hideous that, if true, instead of a revolution, it would draw down a deluge;—it was the hatred, carefully instilled, of the poor against the rich—it was the war breathed between class and class—it was that envy of all superiorities, which loves to show itself by allowing virtue only to a blouse, and asserting that a man must be a rogue if he belong to that rank of society in which, from the very gifts of education, from the necessary associations of circumstances, roguery is the last thing probable or natural. It was all this, and things a thousand times worse, that set my head in a whirl, as hour after hour slipped on, and I still gazed, spell-bound, on these Chimæras and Typhons—these symbols of the Destroying Principle. "Poor Vivian!" said I, as I rose at last, "if thou readest these books with pleasure, or from habit, no wonder that thou seemest to me so obtuse about right and wrong, and to have a great cavity where thy brain should have the bump of 'conscientiousness' in full salience!"

Nevertheless, to do those demoniacs justice, I had got through time imperceptibly by their pestilent help; and I was startled to see, by my watch, how late it

was. I had just resolved to leave a line, fixing an appointment for the morrow, and so depart, when I heard Vivian's knock—a knock that had great character in it—haughty, impatient, irregular; not a neat, symmetrical, harmonious, unpretending knock, but a knock that seemed to set the whole house and street at defiance: it was a knock bullying—a knock ostentatious—a knock irritating and offensive—"impiger" and "iracundus."

But the step that came up the stairs did not suit the knock: it was a step light, yet firm—slow, yet elastic.

The maid-servant who had opened the door had, no doubt, informed Vivian of my visit, for he did not seem surprised to see me; but he cast that hurried, suspicious look round the room which a man is apt to cast when he has left his papers about, and finds some idler, on whose trustworthiness he by no means depends, seated in the midst of the unguarded secrets. The look was not flattering; but my conscience was so unreproachful that I laid all the blame upon the general suspiciousness of Vivian's character.

"Three hours, at least, have I been here!" said I, maliciously.

"Three hours!"—again the look.

"And this is the worst secret I have discovered,"—and I pointed to those literary Manicheans.

"Oh!" said he carelessly, "French novels!—I don't wonder you stayed so long. I can't read your English novels—flat and insipid: there are truth and life here."

"Truth and life!" cried I, every hair on my head erect with astonishment—"then hurrah for falsehood and death!"

"They don't please you; no accounting for tastes."

"I beg your pardon—I account for yours, if you really take for truth and life monsters so nefast and flagitious. For heaven's sake, my dear fellow, don't suppose that any man could get on in England—get anywhere but to the Old Bailey or Norfolk Island, if he squared his conduct to such topsy-turvy notions of the world as I find here."

"How many years are you my senior," asked Vivian sneeringly, "that you should play the mentor, and correct my ignorance of the world?"

"Vivian, it is not age and experience that speak here, it is something far wiser than they—the instinct of a man's heart, and a gentleman's honour."

"Well, well," said Vivian, rather discomposed, "let the poor books alone; you know my creed—that books influence us little one way or the other."

"By the great Egyptian library, and the soul of Diodorus! I wish you could hear my father upon that point. Come," added I, with sublime compassion—

"come, it is not too late—do let me introduce you to my father. I will consent to read French novels all my life, if a single chat with Austin Caxton does not send you home with a happier face and a lighter heart. Come, let me take you back to dine with us to-day."

"I cannot," said Vivian with some confusion—"I cannot, for this day I leave London. Some other time perhaps—for," he added, but not heartily, "we may meet again."

"I hope so," said I, wringing his hand, "and that is likely,—since, in spite of yourself, I have guessed your secret—your birth and parentage."

"How!" cried Vivian, turning pale, and gnawing his lip—"what do you mean?—speak."

"Well, then, are you not the lost, runaway son of Colonel Vivian? Come, say the truth; let us be confidants."

Vivian threw off a succession of his abrupt sighs; and then, seating himself, leant his face on the table, confused, no doubt, to find himself discovered.

"You are near the mark," said he at last, "but do not ask me farther yet. Some day," he cried impetuously, and springing suddenly to his feet—"some day you shall know all: yes; some day, if I live, when that name shall be high in the world; yes, when the world is at my feet!" He stretched his right hand as if to grasp the space, and his whole face was lighted

with a fierce enthusiasm. The glow died away, and with a slight return of his scornful smile, he said—"Dreams yet; dreams! And now, look at this paper." And he drew out a memorandum, scrawled over with figures.

"This, I think, is my pecuniary debt to you; in a few days, I shall discharge it. Give me your address."

"Oh!" said I, pained, "can you speak to me of money, Vivian?"

"It is one of those instincts of honour you cite so often," answered he, colouring. "Pardon me."

"That is my address," said I, stooping to write, to conceal my wounded feelings. "You will avail yourself of it, I hope, often, and tell me that you are well and happy."

"When I am happy, you shall know."

"You do not require any introduction to Trevanion?"

Vivian hesitated: "No, I think not. If ever I do, I will write for it."

I took up my hat, and was about to go—for I was still chilled and mortified—when, as if by an irresistible impulse, Vivian came to me hastily, flung his arms round my neck, and kissed me as a boy kisses his brother.

"Bear with me!" he cried in a faltering voice: "I

did not think to love any one as you have made me love you, though sadly against the grain. If you are not my good angel, it is that nature and habit are too strong for you. Certainly, some day we shall meet again. I shall have time, in the meanwhile, to see if the world can be indeed 'mine oyster,' which I with sword can open.' I would be *aut Cæsar aut nullus!* Very little other Latin know I to quote from! If Cæsar, men will forgive me all the means to the end; if *nullus*, London has a river, and in every street one may buy a cord!"

"Vivian! Vivian!"

"Now go, my dear friend, while my heart is softened—go, before I shock you with some return of the native Adam. Go—go!"

And taking me gently by the arm, Francis Vivian drew me from the room, and, re-entering, locked his door.

Ah! if I could have left him Robert Hall, instead of those execrable Typhons! But would that medicine have suited his case, or must grim Experience write sterner recipes with her iron hand?

## CHAPTER II.

WHEN I got back, just in time for dinner, Roland had not returned, nor did he return till late in the evening. All our eyes were directed towards him, as we rose with one accord to give him welcome; but his face was like a mask—it was locked, and rigid, and unreadable.

Shutting the door carefully after him, he came to the hearth, stood on it, upright and calm, for a few moments, and then asked—

"Has Blanche gone to bed?"

"Yes," said my mother, "but not to sleep, I am sure; she made me promise to tell her when you came back."

Roland's brow relaxed.

"To-morrow, sister," said he slowly, "will you see that she has the proper mourning made for her? My son is dead."

"Dead!" we cried with one voice, and surrounding him with one impulse.

"Dead! impossible—you could not say it so calmly. Dead!—how do you know? You may be deceived. Who told you?—why do you think so?"

"I have seen his remains," said my uncle, with the same gloomy calm. "We will all mourn for him. Pisistratus, you are heir to my name now, as to your father's. Good-night; excuse me, all—all you dear and kind ones; I am worn out."

Roland lighted his candle and went away, leaving us thunderstruck; but he came back again—looked round—took up his book, open in the favourite passage—nodded again, and again vanished. We looked at each other, as if we had seen a ghost. Then my father rose and went out of the room, and remained in Roland's till the night was wellnigh gone. We sat up—my mother and I—till he returned. His benign face looked profoundly sad.

"How is it, sir? Can you tell us more?"

My father shook his head.

"Roland prays that you may preserve the same forbearance you have shown hitherto, and never mention his son's name to him. Peace be to the living, as to the dead. Kitty, this changes our plans; we must all go to Cumberland—we cannot leave Roland thus!"

"Poor, poor Roland!" said my mother, through her tears. "And to think that father and son were not reconciled. But Roland forgives him now—oh, yes! *now!*"

"It is not Roland we can censure," said my father, almost fiercely; "it is——but enough. We must hurry out of town as soon as we can: Roland will recover in the native air of his old ruins."

We went up to bed mournfully. "And so," thought I, "ends one grand object of my life!—I had hoped to have brought those two together. But, alas! what peacemaker like the grave!"

## CHAPTER III.

My uncle did not leave his room for three days, but he was much closeted with a lawyer; and my father dropped some words which seemed to imply that the deceased had incurred debts, and that the poor Captain was making some charge on his small property. As Roland had said that he had seen the remains of his son, I took it at first for granted that we should attend a funeral, but no word of this was said. On the fourth day, Roland, in deep mourning, entered a hackney coach with the lawyer, and was absent about two hours. I did not doubt that he had thus quietly fulfilled the last mournful offices. On his return, he shut himself up again for the rest of the day, and would not see even my father. But the next morning he made his appearance as usual, and I even thought that he seemed more cheerful than I had yet known him—whether he played a part, or whether the worst was now over, and the grave was less cruel than

uncertainty. On the following day, we all set out for Cumberland.

In the interval, Uncle Jack had been almost constantly at the house, and, to do him justice, he had seemed unaffectedly shocked at the calamity that had befallen Roland. There was, indeed, no want of heart in Uncle Jack, whenever you went straight at it; but it was hard to find if you took a circuitous route towards it through the pockets. The worthy speculator had indeed much business to transact with my father before we left town. The *Anti-Publisher Society* had been set up, and it was through the obstetric aid of that fraternity that the Great Book was to be ushered into the world. The new journal, the *Literary Times*, was also far advanced—not yet out, but my father was fairly in for it. There were preparations for its debut on a vast scale, and two or three gentlemen in black—one of whom looked like a lawyer, and another like a printer, and a third uncommonly like a Jew—called twice, with papers of a very formidable aspect. All these preliminaries settled, the last thing I heard Uncle Jack say, with a slap on my father's back, was, "Fame and fortune both made now!—you may go to sleep in safety, for you leave me wide awake. Jack Tibbets never sleeps!"

I had thought it strange that, since my abrupt exodus from Trevanion's house, no notice had been

taken of any of us by himself or Lady Ellinor. But on the very eve of our departure, came a kind note from Trevanion to me, dated from his favourite country seat, (accompanied by a present of some rare books to my father,) in which he said briefly that there had been illness in his family, which had obliged him to leave town for a change of air, but that Lady Ellinor expected to call on my mother the next week. He had found amongst his books some curious works of the Middle Ages, amongst others a complete set of Cardan, which he knew my father would like to have, and so sent them. There was no allusion to what had passed between us.

In reply to this note, after due thanks on my father's part, who seized upon the Cardan (Lyons edition, 1663, ten volumes folio) as a silk-worm does upon a mulberry leaf, I expressed our joint regrets that there was no hope of our seeing Lady Ellinor, as we were just leaving town. I should have added something on the loss my uncle had sustained, but my father thought that, since Roland shrank from any mention of his son, even by his nearest kindred, it would be his obvious wish not to parade his affliction beyond that circle.

And there had been illness in Trevanion's family! On whom had it fallen? I could not rest satisfied with that general expression, and I took my answer myself to Trevanion's house, instead of sending it by

the post. In reply to my inquiries, the porter said that all the family were expected at the end of the week; that he had heard both Lady Ellinor and Miss Trevanion had been rather poorly, but that they were now better. I left my note, with orders to forward it; and my wounds bled afresh as I came away.

We had the whole coach to ourselves in our journey, and a silent journey it was, till we arrived at a little town about eight miles from my uncle's residence, to which we could only get through a cross-road. My uncle insisted on preceding us that night, and, though he had written, before we started, to announce our coming, he was fidgety lest the poor tower should not make the best figure it could;—so he went alone, and we took our ease at our inn.

Betimes the next day we hired a fly-coach—for a chaise could never have held us and my father's books—and jogged through a labyrinth of villanous lanes, which no Marshal Wade had ever reformed from their primal chaos. But poor Mrs Primmins and the canary-bird alone seemed sensible of the jolts; the former, who sat opposite to us, wedged amidst a medley of packages, all marked "Care, to be kept top uppermost," (why I know not, for they were but books, and whether they lay top or bottom it could not materially affect their value,)—the former, I say, contrived to extend her arms over those *disjecta*

*membra*, and, griping a window-sill with the right hand, and a window-sill with the left, kept her seat rampant, like the split eagle of the Austrian Empire —in fact, it would be well, now-a-days, if the split eagle were as firm as Mrs Primmins! As for the canary, it never failed to respond, by an astonished chirp, to every "Gracious me!" and "Lord save us!" which the delve into a rut, or the bump out of it, sent forth from Mrs Primmins's lips, with all the emphatic dolor of the "Aî, *aî*!" in a Greek chorus.

But my father, with his broad hat over his brows, was in deep thought. The scenes of his youth were rising before him, and his memory went, smooth as a spirit's wing, over delve and bump. And my mother, who sat next him, had her arm on his shoulder, and was watching his face jealously. Did she think that, in that thoughtful face, there was regret for the old love? Blanche, who had been very sad, and had wept much and quietly since they put on her the mourning, and told her that she had no brother, (though she had no remembrance of the lost,) began now to evince infantine curiosity and eagerness to catch the first peep of her father's beloved tower. And Blanche sat on my knee, and I shared her impatience. At last there came in view a church spire—a church—a plain square building near it, the parsonage, (my father's old home)—a long straggling street of

cottages and rude shops, with a better kind of house here and there—and in the hinder ground, a gray deformed mass of wall and ruin, placed on one of those eminences on which the Danes loved to pitch camp or build fort, with one high, rude, Anglo-Norman tower rising from the midst. Few trees were round it, and those either poplars or firs, save, as we approached, one mighty oak—integral and unscathed. The road now wound behind the parsonage, and up a steep ascent. Such a road!—the whole parish ought to have been flogged for it! If I had sent up a road like that, even on a map, to Dr Herman, I should not have sat down in comfort for a week to come!

The fly-coach came to a full stop.

"Let us get out," cried I, opening the door, and springing to the ground to set the example.

Blanche followed, and my respected parents came next. But when Mrs Primmins was about to heave herself into movement,

"*Papæ!*" said my father. "I think, Mrs Primmins, you must remain in, to keep the books steady."

"Lord love you!" cried Mrs Primmins, aghast.

"The subtraction of such a mass, or *moles*—supple and elastic as all flesh is, and fitting into the hard corners of the inert matter—such a subtraction, Mrs Primmins, would leave a vacuum which no natural system, certainly no artificial organisation, could sus-

tain. There would be a regular dance of atoms, Mrs Primmins; my books would fly here, there, on the floor, out of the window!

*"Corporis officium est quoniam omnia deorsum."*

The business of a body like yours, Mrs Primmins, is to press all things down—to keep them tight, as you will know one of these days—that is, if you will do me the favour to read Lucretius, and master that material philosophy, of which I may say, without flattery, my dear Mrs Primmins, that you are a living illustration."

These, the first words my father had spoken since we set out from the inn, seemed to assure my mother that she need have no apprehension as to the character of his thoughts, for her brow cleared, and she said, laughing,

"Only look at poor Primmins, and then at that hill!"

"You may subtract Primmins, if you will be answerable for the remnant, Kitty. Only, I warn you that it is against all the laws of physics."

So saying, he sprang lightly forward, and, taking hold of my arm, paused and looked round, and drew the loud free breath with which we draw native air.

"And yet," said my father, after that grateful and affectionate inspiration—"and yet, it must be owned,

that a more ugly country one cannot see out of Cambridgeshire."*

"Nay," said I, "it is bold and large, it has a beauty of its own. Those immense, undulating, uncultivated, treeless tracks have surely their charm of wildness and solitude! And how they suit the character of the ruin! All is feudal there: I understand Roland better now."

"I hope in heaven Cardan will come to no harm!" cried my father; "he is very handsomely bound; and he fitted beautifully just into the fleshiest part of that fidgety Primmins."

Blanche, meanwhile, had run far before us, and I followed fast. There were still the remains of that deep trench (surrounding the ruins on three sides, leaving a ragged hill-top at the fourth) which made the favourite fortification of all the Teutonic tribes. A causeway, raised on brick arches, now, however, supplied the place of the drawbridge, and the outer gate was but a mass of picturesque ruin. Entering into the courtyard or bailey, the old castle mound, from which justice had been dispensed, was in full view, rising higher than the broken walls around it,

* This certainly cannot be said of Cumberland generally, one of the most beautiful counties in Great Britain. But the immediate district to which Mr Caxton's exclamation refers, if not ugly, is at least savage, bare, and rude.

and partially overgrown with brambles. And there stood, comparatively whole, the tower or keep, and from its portals emerged the veteran owner.

His ancestors might have received us in more state, but certainly they could not have given us a warmer greeting. In fact, in his own domain, Roland appeared another man. His stiffness, which was a little repulsive to those who did not understand it, was all gone. He seemed less proud, precisely because he and his pride, on that ground, were on good terms with each other. How gallantly he extended—not his arm, in our modern Jack-and-Jill sort of fashion—but his right hand to my mother; how carefully he led her over "brake, bush, and scaur," through the low vaulted door, where a tall servant, who, it was easy to see, had been a soldier—in the precise livery, no doubt, warranted by the heraldic colours, (his stockings were red!)—stood upright as a sentry. And, coming into the hall, it looked absolutely cheerful—it took us by surprise. There was a great fireplace, and, though it was still summer, a great fire! It did not seem a bit too much, for the walls were stone, the lofty roof open to the rafters, while the windows were small and narrow, and so high and so deep sunk that one seemed in a vault. Nevertheless, I say the room looked sociable and cheerful—thanks principally to the fire, and partly to a very ingenious medley of

old tapestry at one end, and matting at the other, fastened to the lower part of the walls, seconded by an arrangement of furniture which did credit to my uncle's taste for the Picturesque. After we had looked about and admired to our hearts' content, Roland took us—not up one of those noble staircases you see in the later manorial residences—but a little winding stone stair, into the rooms he had appropriated to his guests. There was first a small chamber, which he called my father's study—in truth, it would have done for any philosopher or saint who wished to shut out the world—and might have passed for the interior of such a column as the Stylites inhabited; for you must have climbed a ladder to have looked out of the window, and then the vision of no short-sighted man could have got over the interval in the wall made by the narrow casement, which, after all, gave no other prospect than a Cumberland sky, with an occasional rook in it. But my father, I think I have said before, did not much care for scenery, and he looked round with great satisfaction upon the retreat assigned him.

"We can knock up shelves for your books in no time," said my uncle, rubbing his hands.

"It would be a charity," quoth my father, "for they have been very long in a recumbent position, and would like to stretch themselves, poor things.

My dear Roland, this room is made for books—so round and so deep. I shall sit here like Truth in a well."

"And there is a room for you, sister, just out of it," said my uncle, opening a little low prison-like door into a charming room, for its window was low, and it had an iron balcony; "and out of that is the bed-room. For you, Pisistratus, my boy, I am afraid that it is soldier's quarters, indeed, with which you will have to put up. But never mind; in a day or two we shall make all worthy a general of your illustrious name—for he was a great general, Pisistratus the First—was he not, brother?"

"All tyrants are," said my father: "the knack of soldiering is indispensable to them."

"Oh, you may say what you please here!" said Roland, in high good humour, as he drew me down stairs, still apologising for my quarters, and so earnestly, that I made up my mind that I was to be put into an *oubliette*. Nor were my suspicions much dispelled on seeing that we had to leave the keep, and pick our way into what seemed to me a mere heap of rubbish, on the dexter side of the court. But I was agreeably surprised to find, amidst these wrecks, a room with a noble casement, commanding the whole country, and placed immediately over a plot of ground cultivated as a garden. The furniture

was ample, though homely; the floors and walls well matted; and, altogether, despite the inconvenience of having to cross the courtyard to get to the rest of the house, and being wholly without the modern luxury of a bell, I thought that I could not be better lodged.

"But this is a perfect bower, my dear uncle! Depend on it, it was the bower-chamber of the Dames de Caxton—heaven rest them!"

"No," said my uncle, gravely; "I suspect it must have been the chaplain's room, for the chapel was to the right of you. An earlier chapel, indeed, formerly existed in the keep tower—for, indeed, it is scarcely a true keep without chapel, well, and hall. I can show you part of the roof of the first, and the two last are entire; the well is very curious, formed in the substance of the wall at one angle of the hall. In Charles the First's time, our ancestor lowered his only son down in a bucket, and kept him there six hours, while a Malignant mob was storming the tower. I need not say that our ancestor himself scorned to hide from such a rabble, for *he* was a grown man. The boy lived to be a sad spendthrift, and used the well for cooling his wine. He drank up a great many good acres."

"I should scratch him out of the pedigree, if I were you. But, pray, have you not discovered the

proper chamber of that great Sir William, about whom my father is so shamefully sceptical?"

"To tell you a secret," answered the Captain, giving me a sly poke in the ribs, "I have put your father into it! There are the initial letters W. C. let into the cusp of the York rose, and the date, three years before the battle of Bosworth, over the chimneypiece."

I could not help joining my uncle's grim low laugh at this characteristic pleasantry; and after I had complimented him on so judicious a mode of proving his point, I asked him how he could possibly have contrived to fit up the ruin so well, especially as he had scarcely visited it since his purchase."

"Why," said he, "some years ago, that poor fellow you now see as my servant, and who is gardener, bailiff, seneschal, butler, and anything else you can put him to, was sent out of the army on the invalid list. So I placed him here; and as he is a capital carpenter, and has had a very fair education, I told him what I wanted, and put by a small sum every year for repairs and furnishing. It is astonishing how little it cost me; for Bolt, poor fellow, (that is his name,) caught the right spirit of the thing, and most of the furniture, (which you see is ancient and suitable,) he picked up at different cottages and farmhouses in the neighbourhood. As it is, however, we

have plenty more rooms here and there—only, of late," continued my uncle, slightly changing colour, "I had no money to spare. But come," he resumed, with an evident effort—"come and see my barrack: it is on the other side of the hall, and made out of what no doubt were the butteries."

We reached the yard, and found the fly-coach had just crawled to the door. My father's head was buried deep in the vehicle,—he was gathering up his packages, and sending out, oracle-like, various muttered objurgations and anathemas upon Mrs Primmins and her vacuum; which Mrs Primmins, standing by and making a lap with her apron to receive the packages and anathemas simultaneously, bore with the mildness of an angel, lifting up her eyes to heaven and murmuring something about "poor old bones." Though, as for Mrs Primmins's bones, they had been myths these twenty years, and you might as soon have found a Plesiosaurus in the fat lands of Romney Marsh as a bone amidst those layers of flesh in which my poor father thought he had so carefully cottoned up his Cardan.

Leaving these parties to adjust matters between them, we stepped under the low doorway, and entered Rowland's room. Oh, certainly Bolt *had* caught the spirit of the thing!—certainly he had penetrated down even to the very pathos that lay within the deeps of

Roland's character. Buffon says "the style is the man;" there, the room was the man. That nameless, inexpressible, soldier-like, methodical neatness which belonged to Roland—that was the first thing that struck one—that was the general character of the whole. Then, in details, there, in stout oak shelves, were the books on which my father loved to jest his more imaginative brother,—there they were, Froissart, Barante, Joinville, the *Mort d'Arthur*, *Amadis of Gaul*, Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, a noble copy of Strutt's *Horda*, Mallet's *Northern Antiquities*, Percy's *Reliques*, Pope's *Homer*, books on gunnery, archery, hawking, fortification—old chivalry and modern war together cheek by jowl.

Old chivalry and modern war!—look to that tilting helmet with the tall Caxton crest, and look to that trophy near it, a French cuirass—and that old banner (a knight's pennon) surmounting those crossed bayonets. And over the chimneypiece there—bright, clean, and, I warrant you, dusted daily—are Roland's own sword, his holsters and pistols, yea, the saddle, pierced and lacerated, from which he had reeled when that leg——I gasped—I felt it all at a glance, and I stole softly to the spot, and, had Roland not been there, I could have kissed that sword as reverently as if it had been a Bayard's or a Sidney's.

My uncle was too modest to guess my emotion; he

rather thought I had turned my face to conceal a smile at his vanity, and said, in a deprecating tone of apology—"It was all Bolt's doing, foolish fellow."

## CHAPTER IV.

Our host regaled us with a hospitality that notably contrasted his economical thrifty habits in London. To be sure, Bolt had caught the great pike which headed the feast; and Bolt, no doubt, had helped to rear those fine chickens *ab ovo;* Bolt, I have no doubt, made that excellent Spanish omelette; and, for the rest, the products of the sheepwalk and the garden came in as volunteer auxiliaries—very different from the mercenary recruits by which those metropolitan *Condottieri*, the butcher and green-grocer, hasten the ruin of that melancholy commonwealth called "genteel poverty."

Our evening passed cheerfully; and Roland, contrary to his custom, was talker in chief. It was eleven o'clock before Bolt appeared with a lantern to conduct me through the court-yard to my dormitory, among the ruins—a ceremony which, every night, shine or dark, he insisted upon punctiliously performing.

It was long before I could sleep—before I could believe that but so few days had elapsed since Roland heard of his son's death—that son whose fate had so long tortured him; and yet, never had Roland appeared so free from sorrow! Was it natural—was it effort? Several days passed before I could answer that question, and then not wholly to my satisfaction. Effort there was, or rather resolute systematic determination. At moments Roland's head drooped, his brows met, and the whole man seemed to sink. Yet these were only moments; he would rouse himself up, like a dozing charger at the sound of a trumpet, and shake off the creeping weight. But, whether from the vigour of his determination, or from some aid in other trains of reflection, I could not but perceive that Roland's sadness really was less grave and bitter than it had been, or than it was natural to suppose. He seemed to transfer, daily more and more, his affections from the dead to those around him, especially to Blanche and myself. He let it be seen that he looked on me now as his lawful successor—as the future supporter of his name; he was fond of confiding to me all his little plans, and consulting me on them. He would walk with me around his domains, (of which I shall say more hereafter,)—point out, from every eminence we climbed, where the broad lands which his forefathers owned stretched away to the

horizon; unfold with tender hand the mouldering pedigree, and rest lingeringly on those of his ancestors who had held martial post, or had died on the field. There was a crusader who had followed Richard to Ascalon; there was a knight who had fought at Agincourt; there was a cavalier (whose picture was still extant,) with fair lovelocks, who had fallen at Worcester—no doubt the same who had cooled his son in that well which the son devoted to more agreeable associations. But of all these worthies there was none whom my uncle, perhaps from the spirit of contradiction, valued like that apocryphal Sir William: and why?—because, when the apostate Stanley turned the fortunes of the field at Bosworth, and when that cry of despair—"Treason! treason!" burst from the lips of the last Plantagenet, "amongst the faithless," this true soldier, "faithful found!" had fallen in that lion-rush which Richard made at his foe. "Your father tells me that Richard was a murderer and usurper," quoth my uncle. "Sir, that might be true or not; but it was not on the field of battle that his followers were to reason on the character of the master who trusted them, especially when a legion of foreign hirelings stood opposed to them. I would not have descended from that turncoat Stanley to be lord of all the lands the Earls of Derby can boast of. Sir, in loyalty, men fight and die for a grand principle, and a lofty passion; and this brave Sir William

was paying back to the last Plantagenet the benefits he had received from the first!"

"And yet it may be doubted," said I maliciously, "whether William Caxton the printer did not—"

"Plague, pestilence, and fire seize William Caxton the printer, and his invention too!" cried my uncle barbarously. "When there were only a few books, at least they were good ones; and now they are so plentiful, all they do is to confound the judgment, unsettle the reason, drive the good books out of cultivation, and draw a ploughshare of innovation over every ancient landmark; seduce the women, womanise the men, upset states, thrones, and churches; rear a race of chattering, conceited coxcombs, who can always find books in plenty to excuse them from doing their duty; make the poor discontented, the rich crotchety and whimsical, refine away the stout old virtues into quibbles and sentiments! All imagination formerly was expended in noble action, adventure, enterprise, high deeds and aspirations; now a man can but be imaginative by feeding on the false excitement of passions he never felt, dangers he never shared; and he fritters away all there is of life to spare in him upon the fictitious love-sorrows of Bond Street and St James's. Sir, chivalry ceased when the press rose! And to fasten upon me, as a forefather, out of all men who ever lived and sinned, the very

man who has most destroyed what I most valued—who, by the Lord! with his cursed invention has well-nigh got rid of respect for forefathers altogether—is a cruelty of which my brother had never been capable, if that printer's devil had not got hold of him!"

That a man in this blessed nineteenth century should be such a Vandal! and that my Uncle Roland should talk in a strain that Totila would have been ashamed of, within so short a time after my father's scientific and erudite oration on the Hygeiana of Books, was enough to make one despair of the progress of intellect and the perfectibility of our species. And I have no manner of doubt that, all the while, my uncle had a brace of books in his pockets, Robert Hall one of them! In truth, he had talked himself into a passion, and did not know what nonsense he was saying. But this explosion of Captain Roland's has shattered the thread of my matter. Pouff! I must take breath and begin again!

Yes, in spite of my sauciness, the old soldier evidently took to me more and more. And, besides our critical examination of the property and the pedigree, he carried me with him on long excursions to distant villages, where some memorial of a defunct Caxton, a coat of arms, or an epitaph on a tombstone, might be still seen. And he made me pore over topographical works and county histories, (forgetful, Goth

that he was, that for those very authorities he was indebted to the repudiated printer!) to find some anecdote of his beloved dead! In truth, the county for miles round bore the *vestigia* of those old Caxtons; their handwriting was on many a broken wall. And, obscure as they all were, compared to that great operative of the Sanctuary at Westminster, whom my father clung to—still, that the yesterdays that had lighted them the way to dusty death had cast no glare on dishonoured scutcheons seemed clear, from the popular respect and traditional affection in which I found that the name was still held in hamlet and homestead. It was pleasant to see the veneration with which this small hidalgo of some three hundred a-year was held, and the patriarchal affection with which he returned it. Roland was a man who would walk into a cottage, rest his cork leg on the hearth, and talk for the hour together upon all that lay nearest to the hearts of the owners. There is a peculiar spirit of aristocracy amongst agricultural peasants: they like old names and families; they identify themselves with the honours of a house, as if of its clan. They do not care so much for wealth as townsfolk and the middle class do; they have a pity, but a respectful one, for well-born poverty. And then this Roland, too—who would go and dine in a cook-shop, and receive change for a shilling, and shun the ruin-

ous luxury of a hack cabriolet—could be positively extravagant in his liberalities to those around him. He was altogether another being in his paternal acres. The shabby-genteel, half-pay captain, lost in the whirl of London, here luxuriated into a dignified ease of manner that Chesterfield might have admired. And, if to please is the true sign of politeness, I wish you could have seen the faces that smiled upon Captain Roland, as he walked down the village, nodding from side to side.

One day a frank, hearty, old woman, who had known Roland as a boy, seeing him lean on my arm, stopped us, as she said bluffly, to take a "geud luik" at me.

Fortunately I was stalwart enough to pass muster, even in the eyes of a Cumberland matron; and, after a compliment at which Roland seemed much pleased, she said to me, but pointing to the Captain—

"Hegh, sir, now you ha the bra time before you; you maun een try and be as geud as *he*. And if life last, ye wull too—for there never waur a bad ane of that stock. Wi' heads kindly stup'd to the least, and lifted manfu' oop to the heighest—that ye all war' sin ye came from the Ark. Blessins on the ould name—though little pelf goes with it—it sounds on the peur man's ear like a bit of gould!"

"Do you not see now," said Roland, as we turned

away, "what we owe to a name, and what to our forefathers?—do you not see why the remotest ancestor has a right to our respect and consideration—for he was a parent? 'Honour your parents'—the law does not say, 'Honour your children!' If a child disgrace us, and the dead, and the sanctity of this great heritage of their virtues—*the name;*—if he does—" Roland stopped short, and added fervently, "But you are my heir now—I have no fear! What matters one foolish old man's sorrows?—the name, that property of generations, is saved, thank Heaven—the name!"

Now the riddle was solved, and I understood why, amidst all his natural grief for a son's loss, that proud father was consoled. For he was less himself a father than a son—son to the long dead. From every grave where a progenitor slept, he had heard a parent's voice. He could bear to be bereaved, if the forefathers were not dishonoured. Roland was more than half a Roman—the son might still cling to his household affections, but the *lares* were a part of his religion.

## CHAPTER V.

But I ought to be hard at work, preparing myself for Cambridge. The deuce!—how can I? The point in academical education on which I require most preparation is Greek composition. I come to my father, who, one might think, was at home enough in this. But rare indeed is it to find a great scholar who is a good teacher.

My dear father! if one is content to take you in your own way, there never was a more admirable instructor for the heart, the head, the principles or the tastes—when you have discovered that there is some one sore to be healed—one defect to be repaired; and you have rubbed your spectacles, and got your hand fairly into that recess between your frill and your waistcoat. But to go to you, cut and dry, monotonously, regularly—book and exercise in hand—to see the mournful patience with which you tear yourself from that great volume of Cardan in the very

honeymoon of possession—and then to note those mild eyebrows gradually distend themselves into perplexed diagonals, over some false quantity or some barbarous collocation—till there steal forth that horrible "Papæ!" which means more on your lips than I am sure it ever did when Latin was a live language, and "Papæ!" a natural and unpedantic ejaculation!—no, I would sooner blunder through the dark by myself a thousand times, than light my rush-light at the lamp of that Phlegethonian "Papæ!"

And then my father would wisely and kindly, but wondrous slowly, erase three-fourths of one's pet verses, and intercalate others that one saw were exquisite, but could not exactly see why. And then one asked why; and my father shook his head in despair, and said—"But you ought to *feel* why!"

In short, scholarship to him was like poetry: he could no more teach it you than Pindar could have taught you how to make an ode. You breathed the aroma, but you could no more seize and analyse it, than, with the opening of your naked hand, you could carry off the scent of a rose. I soon left my father in peace to Cardan, and to the Great Book, which last, by the way, advanced but slowly. For Uncle Jack had now insisted on its being published in quarto, with illustrative plates; and those plates took an immense time, and were to cost an immense sum—

but that cost was the affair of the Anti-Publisher Society. But how can I settle to work by myself? No sooner have I got into my room—*penitus ab orbe divisus*, as I rashly think—than there is a tap at the door. Now it is my mother, who is benevolently engaged upon making curtains to all the windows, (a trifling superfluity that Bolt had forgotten or disdained,) and who wants to know how the draperies are fashioned at Mr Trevanion's: a pretence to have me near her, and see with her own eyes that I am not fretting;—the moment she hears I have shut myself up in my room, she is sure that it is for sorrow. Now it is Bolt, who is making book-shelves for my father, and desires to consult me at every turn, especially as I have given him a Gothic design, which pleases him hugely. Now it is Blanche, whom, in an evil hour, I undertook to teach to draw, and who comes in on tiptoe, vowing she'll not disturb me, and sits so quiet that she fidgets me out of all patience. Now, and much more often, it is the Captain, who wants me to walk, to ride, to fish. And, by St Hubert! (saint of the chase,) bright August comes—and there is moor-game on those barren wolds—and my uncle has given me the gun he shot with at my age—single-barrelled, flint lock—but you would not have laughed at it if you had seen the strange feats it did in Roland's hands—while in mine, I could

always lay the blame on the flint lock! Time, in short, passed rapidly; and if Roland and I had our dark hours, we chased them away before they could settle—shot them on the wing as they got up.

Then, too, though the immediate scenery around my uncle's was so bleak and desolate, the country within a few miles was so full of objects of interest—of landscapes so poetically grand or lovely; and occasionally we coaxed my father from the Cardan, and spent whole days by the margin of some glorious lake.

Amongst these excursions, I made one by myself to that house in which my father had known the bliss and the pangs of that stern first-love which still left its scars fresh on my own memory. The house, large and imposing, was shut up—the Trevanions had not been there for years—the pleasure-grounds had been contracted into the smallest possible space. There was no positive decay or ruin—that Trevanion would never have allowed; but there was the dreary look of absenteeship everywhere. I penetrated into the house with the help of my card and half-a-crown. I saw that memorable boudoir—I could fancy the very spot in which my father had heard the sentence that had changed the current of his life. And when I returned home, I looked with new tenderness on my father's placid brow—and blessed anew that tender helpmate,

who, in her patient love, had chased from it every shadow.

I had received one letter from Vivian a few days after our arrival. It had been redirected from my father's house, at which I had given him my address. It was short, but seemed cheerful. He said, that he believed he had at last hit on the right way, and should keep to it—that he and the world were better friends than they had been—and that the only way to keep friends with the world was to treat it as a tamed tiger, and have one hand on a crowbar while one fondled the beast with the other. He enclosed me a bank-note which somewhat more than covered his debt to me, and bade me pay him the surplus when he should claim it as a millionnaire. He gave me no address in his letter, but it bore the post-mark of Godalming. I had the impertinent curiosity to look into an old topographical work upon Surrey, and in a supplemental itinerary I found this passage, "To the left of the beechwood, three miles from Godalming, you catch a glimpse of the elegant seat of Francis Vivian, Esq." To judge by the date of the work, the said Francis Vivian might be the grandfather of my friend, his namesake. There could no longer be any doubt as to the parentage of this prodigal son.

The long vacation was now nearly over, and all his guests were to leave the poor Captain. In fact, we

had made a long trespass on his hospitality. It was settled that I was to accompany my father and mother to their long-neglected *penates*, and start thence for Cambridge.

Our parting was sorrowful — even Mrs Primmins wept as she shook hands with Bolt. But Bolt, an old soldier, was of course a lady's man. The brothers did not shake hands only — they fondly embraced, as brothers of that time of life rarely do now-a-days, except on the stage. And Blanche, with one arm round my mother's neck and one round mine, sobbed in my ear,—"But I will be your little wife, I will." Finally, the fly-coach once more received us all—all but poor Blanche, and we looked round and missed her.

## CHAPTER VI.

ALMA MATER! Alma Mater! New-fashioned folks, with their large theories of education, may find fault with thee. But a true Spartan mother thou art—hard and stern as the old matron who bricked up her son Pausanias, bringing the first stone to immure him; hard and stern, I say, to the worthless, but full of majestic tenderness to the worthy.

For a young man to go up to Cambridge (I say nothing of Oxford, knowing nothing thereof) merely as routine work, to lounge through three years to a degree among the ὁι πολλοι—for such an one, Oxford Street herself, whom the immortal Opium-eater hath so direly apostrophised, is not a more careless and stony-hearted mother. But for him who will read, who will work, who will seize the rare advantages proffered, who will select his friends judiciously—yea,

out of that vast ferment of young idea in its lusty vigour, choose the good and reject the bad—there is plenty to make those three years rich with fruit imperishable—three years nobly spent, even though one must pass over the Ass's Bridge to get into the Temple of Honour.

Important changes in the Academical system have been recently announced, and honours are henceforth to be accorded to the successful disciples in moral and natural sciences. By the side of the old throne of Mathesis, they have placed two very useful *fauteuils à la Voltaire.* I have no objection; but, in those three years of life, it is not so much the thing learned, as the steady perseverance in learning something that is excellent.

It was fortunate, in one respect, for me that I had seen a little of the real world—the metropolitan, before I came to that mimic one—the cloistral. For what were called pleasures in the last, and which might have allured me, had I come fresh from school, had no charm for me now. Hard drinking and high play, a certain mixture of coarseness and extravagance, made the fashion among the idle when I was at the university, *consule Planco*—when Wordsworth was master of Trinity: it may be altered now.

But I had already outlived such temptations, and

so, naturally, I was thrown out of the society of the idle, and somewhat into that of the laborious.

Still, to speak frankly, I had no longer the old pleasure in books. If my acquaintance with the great world had destroyed the temptation to puerile excesses, it had also increased my constitutional tendency to practical action. And, alas! in spite of all the benefit I had derived from Robert Hall, there were times when memory was so poignant that I had no choice but to rush from the lonely room haunted by tempting phantoms too dangerously fair, and sober down the fever of the heart by some violent bodily fatigue. The ardour which belongs to early youth, and which it best dedicates to knowledge, had been charmed prematurely to shrines less severely sacred. Therefore though I laboured, it was with that full *sense of labour* which (as I found at a much later period of life) the truly triumphant student never knows. Learning—that marble image—warms into life, not at the toil of the chisel, but the worship of the sculptor. The mechanical workman finds but the voiceless stone.

At my uncle's, such a thing as a newspaper rarely made its appearance. At Cambridge, even among reading men, the newspapers had their due importance. Politics ran high; and I had not been three days at Cambridge before I heard Trevanion's name. News-

papers, therefore, had their charms for me. Trevanion's prophecy about himself seemed about to be fulfilled. There were rumours of changes in the cabinet. Trevanion's name was bandied to and fro, struck from praise to blame, high and low, as a shuttlecock. Still the changes were not made, and the cabinet held firm. Not a word in the *Morning Post*, under the head of *fashionable intelligence*, as to rumours that would have agitated me more than the rise and fall of governments—no hint of "the speedy nuptials of the daughter and sole heiress of a distinguished and wealthy commoner:" only now and then, in enumerating the circle of brilliant guests at the house of some party chief, I gulped back the heart that rushed to my lips, when I saw the names of Lady Ellinor and Miss Trevanion.

But amongst all that prolific progeny of the periodical press—remote offspring of my great namesake and ancestor, (for I hold the faith of my father,) —where was the *Literary Times?*—what had so long retarded its promised blossoms? Not a leaf in the shape of advertisements had yet emerged from its mother earth. I hoped from my heart that the whole thing was abandoned, and would not mention it in my letters home, lest I should revive the mere idea of it. But, in default of the *Literary Times*, there did appear

a new journal, a daily journal too; a tall, slender, and meagre stripling, with a vast head, by way of prospectus, which protruded itself for three weeks successively at the top of the leading article;—with a fine and subtle body of paragraphs;—and the smallest legs, in the way of advertisements, that any poor newspaper ever stood upon! And yet this attenuated journal had a plump and plethoric title, a title that smacked of turtle and venison; an aldermanic, portly, grandiose, Falstaffian title—it was called THE CAPITALIST. And all those fine subtle paragraphs were larded out with receipts how to make money. There was an El Dorado in every sentence. To believe that paper, you would think no man had ever yet found a proper return for his pounds, shillings, and pence. You would have turned up your nose at twenty per cent. There was a great deal about Ireland—not her wrongs, thank Heaven! but her fisheries: a long inquiry what had become of the pearls for which Britain was once so famous: a learned disquisition upon certain lost gold mines now happily rediscovered; a very ingenious proposition to turn London smoke into manure, by a new chemical process: recommendations to the poor to hatch chickens in ovens like the ancient Egyptians: agricultural schemes for sowing the waste lands in England with onions, upon the

system adopted near Bedford, net produce one hundred pounds an acre. In short, according to that paper, every rood of ground might well maintain its man, and every shilling be like Hobson's money-bag, "the fruitful parent of a hundred more." For three days, at the newspaper room of the Union Club, men talked of this journal, some pished, some sneered, some wondered; till an ill-natured mathematician, who had just taken his degree, and had spare time on his hands, sent a long letter to the *Morning Chronicle*, showing up more blunders, in some article to which the editor of *The Capitalist* had specially invited attention, (unlucky dog!) than would have paved the whole island of Laputa. After that time, not a soul read *The Capitalist.* How long it dragged on its existence I know not; but it certainly did not die of a *maladie de langueur.*

Little thought I, when I joined in the laugh against *The Capitalist*, that I ought rather to have followed it to its grave, in black crape and weepers,—unfeeling wretch that I was! But, like a poet, O *Capitalist!* thou were not discovered, and appreciated, and prized, and mourned, till thou wert dead and buried, and the bill came in for thy monument!

The first term of my college life was just expiring, when I received a letter from my mother, so agitated, so alarming, at first reading so unintelligible, that I

could only see that some great misfortune had befallen us; and I stopped short and dropped on my knees, to pray for the life and health of those whom that misfortune more specially seemed to menace; and then—and then, towards the end of the last blurred sentence, read twice, thrice, over—I could cry, "Thank Heaven, thank Heaven! it is only, then, money after all!"

# PART ELEVENTH.

# PART ELEVENTH.

## CHAPTER I.

THE next day, on the outside of the Cambridge Telegraph, there was one passenger who ought to have impressed his fellow-travellers with a very respectful idea of his lore in the dead languages; for not a single syllable, in a live one, did he vouchsafe to utter from the moment he ascended that "bad eminence," to the moment in which he regained his mother earth. "Sleep," says honest Sancho, "covers a man better than a cloak." I am ashamed of thee, honest Sancho! thou art a sad plagiarist; for Tibullus said pretty nearly the same thing before thee,—

"Te somnus fusco velavit amictu."*

But is not silence as good a cloak as sleep?—does it not wrap a man round with as offuse and impervious

* Tibullus, iii. 4, 55.

a fold? Silence—what a world it covers!—what busy schemes—what bright hopes and dark fears—what ambition, or what despair! Do you ever see a man in any society sitting mute for hours, and not feel an uneasy curiosity to penetrate the wall he thus builds up between others and himself? Does he not interest you far more than the brilliant talker at your left—the airy wit at your right, whose shafts fall in vain on the sullen barrier of the silent man! Silence, dark sister of Nox and Erebus, how, layer upon layer, shadow upon shadow, blackness upon blackness, thou stretchest thyself from hell to heaven, over thy two chosen haunts—man's heart and the grave!

So, then, wrapped in my greatcoat and my silence, I performed my journey; and on the evening of the second day I reached the old-fashioned brick house. How shrill on my ears sounded the bell! How strange and ominous to my impatience seemed the light gleaming across the windows of the hall! How my heart beat as I watched the face of the servant who opened the gate to my summons!

"All well?" cried I.

"All well, sir," answered the servant, cheerfully. "Mr Squills, indeed, is with master, but I don't think there is anything the matter."

But now my mother appeared at the threshold, and I was in her arms.

"Sisty, Sisty!—my dear, dear son!—beggared, perhaps—and my fault—mine."

"Yours!—come into this room, out of hearing—your fault?"

"Yes—yes!—for if I had had no brother, or if I had not been led away,—if I had, as I ought, entreated poor Austin not to"—

"My dear, dearest mother, *you* accuse yourself for what, it seems, was my uncle's misfortune—I am sure not even his fault! (I made a gulp *there*.) No, lay the fault on the right shoulders—the defunct shoulders of that horrible progenitor, William Caxton the printer; for, though I don't yet know the particulars of what has happened, I will lay a wager it is connected with that fatal invention of printing. Come, come—my father is well, is he not?"

"Yes, thank Heaven."

"And you too, and I, and Roland, and little Blanche! Why, then, you are right to thank Heaven, for your true treasures are untouched. But sit down and explain, pray."

"I cannot explain. I do not understand anything more than that he, my brother,—mine!—has involved Austin in—in"— (a fresh burst of tears.)

I comforted, scolded, laughed, preached, and adjured in a breath; and then, drawing my mother gently on, entered my father's study.

At the table was seated Mr Squills, pen in hand, and a glass of his favourite punch by his side. My father was standing on the hearth, a shade more pale, but with a resolute expression on his countenance, which was new to its indolent thoughtful mildness. He lifted his eyes as the door opened, and then, putting his finger to his lips, as he glanced towards my mother, he said gaily, "No great harm done. Don't believe her! Women always exaggerate, and make realities of their own bugbears: it is the vice of their lively imaginations, as Wierus has clearly shown in accounting for the marks, moles, and hare-lips which they inflict upon their innocent infants before they are even born. My dear boy," added my father, as I here kissed him and smiled in his face, "I thank you for that smile! God bless you!" He wrung my hand, and turned a little aside.

"It is a great comfort," renewed my father, after a short pause, "to know, when a misfortune happens, that it could not be helped. Squills has just discovered that I have no bump of cautiveness; so that, craniologically speaking, if I had escaped one imprudence, I should certainly have run my head against another."

"A man with your development is made to be taken in," said Mr Squills, consolingly.

"Do you hear that, my own Kitty? and have you

the heart to blame Jack any longer—a poor creature cursed with a bump that would take in the Stock Exchange? And can any one resist his bump, Squills?"

"Impossible!" said the surgeon authoritatively.

"Sooner or later it must involve him in its airy meshes—eh, Squills? entrap him into its fatal cerebral cell. There his fate waits him, like the ant-lion in its pit."

"Too true," quoth Squills. "What a phrenological lecturer you would have made!"

"Go, then, my love," said my father, "and lay no blame but on this melancholy cavity of mine, where cautiveness—is not! Go, and let Sisty have some supper; for Squills says that he has a fine development of the mathematical organs, and we want his help. We are hard at work on figures, Pisistratus."

My mother looked broken-hearted, and, obeying submissively, stole to the door without a word. But as she reached the threshold she turned round, and beckoned to me to follow her.

I whispered my father, and went out. My mother was standing in the hall, and I saw by the lamp that she had dried her tears, and that her face, though very sad, was more composed.

"Sisty," she said, in a low voice which struggled to

be firm, "promise me that you will tell me all—the worst, Sisty. They keep it from me, and that is my hardest punishment; for when I don't know all that he—that Austin suffers, it seems to me as if I had lost his heart. Oh, Sisty! my child, my child, don't fear me! I shall be happy whatever befalls us, if I once get back my privilege—my privilege, Sisty, to comfort, to share!—do you understand me?"

"Yes, indeed, my mother! And with your good sense, and clear woman's wit, if you will but feel how much we want them, you will be the best counsellor we could have. So never fear; you and I will have no secrets."

My mother kissed me, and went away with a less heavy step.

As I re-entered, my father came across the room and embraced me.

"My son," he said in a faltering voice, "if your modest prospects in life are ruined—"

"Father, father, can you think of me at such a moment! Me!—Is it possible to ruin the young, and strong, and healthy! Ruin me, with these thews and sinews!—ruin me, with the education you have given me—thews and sinews of the mind! Oh no! there, Fortune is harmless! And you forget, sir,—the saffron bag!"

Squills leapt up, and, wiping his eyes with one

hand, gave me a sounding slap on the shoulder with the other.

"I am proud of the care I took of your infancy, Master Caxton. That comes of strengthening the digestive organs in early childhood. Such sentiments are a proof of magnificent ganglions in a perfect state of order. When a man's tongue is as smooth as I am sure yours is, he slips through misfortune like an eel."

I laughed outright, my father smiled faintly; and, seating myself, I drew towards me a paper filled with Squills' memoranda, and said, "Now to find the unknown quantity. What on earth is this? 'Supposed value of books, £750.' Oh, father! this is impossible. I was prepared for anything but that. Your books—they are your life!"

"Nay," said my father; "after all, they are the offending party in this case, and so ought to be the principal victims. Besides, I believe I know most of them by heart. But, in truth, we are only entering all our effects, to be sure (added my father proudly) that, come what may, we are not dishonoured."

"Humour him," whispered Squills; "we will save the books." Then he added aloud, as he laid finger and thumb on my pulse, "One, two, three, about seventy—capital pulse—soft and full—he can bear the whole: let us administer it."

My father nodded—"Certainly. But, Pisistratus, we must manage your dear mother. Why she should think of blaming herself, because poor Jack took wrong ways to enrich us, I cannot understand. But, as I have had occasion before to remark, Sphinx and Enigma are nouns feminine."

My poor father! that was a vain struggle for thy wonted innocent humour. The lips quivered.

Then the story came out. It seems that, when it was resolved to undertake the publication of the *Literary Times*, a certain number of shareholders had been got together by the indefatigable energies of Uncle Jack; and, in the deed of association and partnership, my father's name figured conspicuously as the holder of a fourth of this joint property. If in this my father had committed some imprudence, he had at least done nothing that, according to the ordinary calculations of a secluded student, could become ruinous. But, just at the time when we were in the hurry of leaving town, Jack had represented to my father that it might be necessary to alter a little the plan of the paper; and, in order to allure a larger circle of readers, touch somewhat on the more vulgar news and interests of the day. A change of plan might involve a change of title; and he suggested to my father the expediency of leaving the smooth hands of Mr Tibbets altogether unfettered, as to the technical name and precise form

of the publication. To this my father had unwittingly assented, on hearing that the other shareholders would do the same. Mr Peck, a printer of considerable opulence, and highly respectable name, had been found to advance the sum necessary for the publication of the earlier numbers, upon the guarantee of the said act of partnership and the additional security of my father's signature to a document, authorising Mr Tibbets to make any change in the form or title of the periodical that might be judged advisable, concurrent with the consent of the other shareholders.

Now it seems that Mr Peck had, in his previous conferences with Mr Tibbets, thrown much cold water on the idea of the *Literary Times*, and had suggested something that should "catch the moneyed public," —the fact being, as was afterwards discovered, that the printer, whose spirit of enterprise was congenial to Uncle Jack's, had shares in three or four speculations, to which he was naturally glad of an oportunity to invite the attention of the public. In a word, no sooner was my poor father's back turned than the *Literary Times* was dropped incontinently, and Mr Peck and Mr Tibbets began to concentrate their luminous notions into that brilliant and comet-like apparition which ultimately blazed forth under the title of *The Capitalist.*

From this change of enterprise the more prudent

and responsible of the original shareholders had altogether withdrawn. A majority, indeed, were left; but the greater part of those were shareholders of that kind most amenable to the influences of Uncle Jack, and willing to be shareholders in anything, since as yet they were possessors of nothing.

Assured of my father's responsibility, the adventurous Peck put plenty of spirit into the first launch of *The Capitalist.* All the walls were placarded with its announcements; circular advertisements ran from one end of the kingdom to the other. Agents were engaged, correspondents levied *en masse.* The invasion of Xerxes on the Greeks was not more munificently provided for than that of *The Capitalist* upon the credulity and avarice of mankind.

But as Providence bestows upon fishes the instrument of fins, whereby they balance and direct their movements, however rapid and erratic, through the pathless deeps, so to the cold-blooded creatures of our own species—that may be classed under the genus MONEY-MAKERS—the same protective power accords the fin-like properties of prudence and caution, wherewith your true money-getter buoys and guides himself majestically through the great seas of speculation. In short, the fishes the net was cast for were all scared from the surface at the first splash. They came round

and smelt at the mesh with their sharp bottle-noses, and then, plying those invaluable fins, made off as fast as they could—plunging into the mud—hiding themselves under rocks and coral banks. Metaphor apart, the capitalists buttoned up their pockets, and would have nothing to say to their namesake.

Not a word of this change, so abhorrent to all the notions of poor Augustine Caxton, had been breathed to him by Peck or Tibbets. He ate, and slept, and worked at the Great Book, occasionally wondering why he had not heard of the advent of the *Literary Times*, unconscious of all the awful responsibilities which *The Capitalist* was entailing on him;—knowing no more of *The Capitalist* than he did of the last loan of the Rothschilds.

Difficult was it for all other human nature, save my father's, not to breathe an indignant anathema on the scheming head of the brother-in-law who had thus violated the most sacred obligations of trust and kindred, and so entangled an unsuspecting recluse. But, to give even Jack Tibbets his due, he had firmly convinced himself that *The Capitalist* would make my father's fortune; and if he did not announce to him the strange and anomalous development into which the original sleeping chrysalis of the *Literary Times* had taken portentous wing, it was purely and wholly in the knowledge that my father's "prejudices,"

as he termed them, would stand in the way of his becoming a Crœsus. And, in fact, Uncle Jack had believed so heartily in his own project, that he had put himself thoroughly into Mr Peck's power, signed bills in his own name to some fabulous amount, and was actually now in the Fleet, whence his penitential and despairing confession was dated, arriving simultaneously with a short letter from Mr Peck, wherein that respectable printer apprised my father that he had continued, at his own risk, the publication of *The Capitalist*, as far as a prudent care for his family would permit; that he need not say that a new daily journal was a very vast experiment; that the expense of such a paper as *The Capitalist* was immeasurably greater than that of a mere literary periodical, as originally suggested; and that now, being constrained to come upon the shareholders for the sums he had advanced, amounting to several thousands, he requested my father to settle with him immediately—delicately implying that he himself might settle as he could with the other shareholders, most of whom, he grieved to add, he had been misled by Mr Tibbets into believing to be men of substance, when in reality they were men of straw!

Nor was this all the evil. The "Great Anti-Bookseller Publishing Society,"—which had maintained a struggling existence—evinced by advertise-

ments of sundry forthcoming works of solid interest and enduring nature, wherein, out of a long list, amidst a pompous array of "Poems;" "Dramas not intended for the Stage;" "Essays by Phileutheros, Philanthropos, Philopolis, Philodemus, and Philalethes," stood prominently forth "The History of Human Error, Vols I. and II., quarto, with illustrations,"—the "Anti-Bookseller Society," I say, that had hitherto evinced nascent and budding life by these exfoliations from its slender stem, died of a sudden blight, the moment its sun, in the shape of Uncle Jack, set in the Cimmerian regions of the Fleet; and a polite letter from another printer (O William Caxton, William Caxton! — fatal progenitor!) informing my father of this event, stated complimentarily that it was to him, "as the most respectable member of the Association," that the said printer would be compelled to look for expenses incurred, not only in the very costly edition of the History of Human Error, but for those incurred in the print and paper devoted to "Poems," "Dramas not intended for the stage," "Essays by Phileutheros, Philanthropos, Philopolis, Philodemus, and Philalethes," with sundry other works, no doubt of a very valuable nature, but in which a considerable loss, in a pecuniary point of view, must be necessarily expected.

I own that, as soon as I had mastered the above agreeable facts, and ascertained from Mr Squills that my father really did seem to have rendered himself legally liable to these demands, I leant back in my chair, stunned and bewildered.

"So you see," said my father, "that as yet we are contending with monsters in the dark—in the dark all monsters look larger and uglier. Even Augustus Cæsar, though certainly he had never scrupled to make as many ghosts as suited his convenience, did not like the chance of a visit from them, and never sat alone *in tenebris*. What the amount of the sums claimed from me may be, we know not; what may be gained from the other shareholders is equally obscure and undefined. But the first thing to do is to get poor Jack out of prison."

"Uncle Jack out of prison!" exclaimed I: "surely, sir, that is carrying forgiveness too far."

"Why, he would not have been in prison if I had not been so blindly forgetful of his weakness, poor man! I ought to have known better. But my vanity misled me; I must needs publish a great book, as if (said Mr Caxton, looking round the shelves) there were not great books enough in the world! I must needs, too, think of advancing and circulating knowledge in the form of a journal—I, who had not knowledge enough of the character of my own brother-in-law

to keep myself from ruin! Come what will, I should think myself the meanest of men to let that poor creature, whom I ought to have considered as a monomaniac, rot in prison, because I, Austin Caxton, wanted common sense. And (concluded my father resolutely) he is your mother's brother, Pisistratus. I should have gone to town at once; but, hearing that my wife had written to you, I waited till I could leave her to the companionship of hope and comfort—two blessings that smile upon every mother in the face of a son like you. To-morrow I go."

"Not a bit of it," said Mr Squills firmly; "as your medical adviser, I forbid you to leave the house for the next six days."

## CHAPTER II.

"SIR," continued Mr Squills, biting off the end of a cigar which he pulled from his pocket, "you concede to me that it is a very important business on which you propose to go to London."

"Of that there is no doubt," replied my father.

"And the doing of business well or ill entirely depends upon the habit of body!" cried Mr Squills triumphantly. "Do you know, Mr Caxton, that while you are looking so calm, and talking so quietly —just on purpose to sustain your son and delude your wife—do you know that your pulse, which is naturally little more than sixty, is nearly a hundred? Do you know, sir, that your mucous membranes are in a state of high irritation, apparent by the *papillæ* at the tip of your tongue? And if, with a pulse like this, and a tongue like that, you think of settling money matters with a set of sharp-witted tradesmen, all I can say is, that you are a ruined man."

"But—" began my father.

"Did not Squire Rollick," pursued Mr Squills—"Squire Rollick, the hardest head at a bargain I know of—did not Squire Rollick sell that pretty little farm of his, Scranny Holt, for thirty per cent below its value? And what was the cause, sir?—the whole county was in amaze!—what was the cause, but an incipient simmering attack of the yellow jaundice, which made him take a gloomy view of human life, and the agricultural interest? On the other hand, did not Lawyer Cool, the most prudent man in the three kingdoms—Lawyer Cool, who was so methodical, that all the clocks in the country were set by his watch—plunge one morning head over heels into a frantic speculation for cultivating the bogs in Ireland, (his watch did not go right for the next three months, which made our whole shire an hour in advance of the rest of England!) And what was the cause of that nobody knew, till I was called in, and found the cerebral membranes in a state of acute irritation, probably just in the region of his acquisitiveness and ideality. No, Mr Caxton, you will stay at home, and take a soothing preparation I shall send you, of lettuce leaves and marsh-mallows. But I," continued Squills, lighting his cigar and taking two determined whiffs—"but *I* will go up to town and settle the business for you, and take with me this young gentleman, whose digestive functions are just in

a state to deal safely with those horrible elements of dyspepsia—the L. S. D."

As he spoke, Mr Squills set his foot significantly upon mine.

"But," resumed my father mildly, "though I thank you very much, Squills, for your kind offer, I do not recognise the necessity of accepting it. I am not so bad a philosopher as you seem to imagine; and the blow I have received has not so deranged my physical organisation as to render me unfit to transact my affairs."

"Hum!" grunted Squills, starting up and seizing my father's pulse; "ninety-six—ninety-six if a beat! And the tongue, sir!"

"Pshaw!" quoth my father, "you have not even seen my tongue!"

"No need of that, I know what it is by the state of the eyelids—tip scarlet, sides rough as a nutmeg-grater!"

"Pshaw!" again said my father, this time impatiently.

"Well," said Squills solemnly, "it is my duty to say, (here my mother entered, to tell me that supper was ready,) and I say it to you, Mrs Caxton, and you, Mr Pisistratus Caxton, as the parties most nearly interested, that if you, sir, go to London upon this matter, I'll not answer for the consequences."

"Oh! Austin, Austin!" cried my mother, running up and throwing her arms round my father's neck; while I, little less alarmed by Squill's serious tone and aspect, represented strongly the inutility of Mr Caxton's personal interference at the first moment. All he could do on arriving in town would be to put the matter into the hands of a good lawyer, and that we could do for him; it would be time enough to send for him when the extent of the mischief done was more clearly ascertained. Meanwhile Squills griped my father's pulse, and my mother hung on his neck.

"Ninety-six—ninety-seven!" groaned Squills in a hollow voice.

"I don't believe it!" cried my father, almost in a passion—"never better nor cooler in my life."

"And the tongue—look at his tongue, Mrs Caxton—a tongue, ma'am, so bright that you could see to read by it!"

"Oh! Austin, Austin!"

"My dear, it is not my tongue that is in fault, I assure you," said my father, speaking through his teeth; "and the man knows no more of my tongue than he does of the Mysteries of Eleusis."

"Put it out then," exclaimed Squills, "and if it be not as I say, you have my leave to go to London, and throw your whole fortune into the two great pits you have dug for it. Put it out!"

"Mr Squills!" said my father, colouring—"Mr Squills, for shame!"

"Dear, dear Austin! your hand is so hot—you are feverish, I am sure."

"Not a bit of it."

"But, sir, only just gratify Mr Squills," said I coaxingly.

"There, there!" said my father, fairly baited into submission, and shyly exhibiting for a moment the extremest end of the vanquished organ of eloquence.

Squills darted forward his lynx-like eyes. "Red as a lobster, and rough as a gooseberry-bush!" cried Squills, in a tone of savage joy.

## CHAPTER III.

How was it possible for one poor tongue, so reviled and persecuted, so humbled, insulted, and triumphed over—to resist three tongues in league against it?

Finally, my father yielded; and Squills, in high spirits, declared that he would go to supper with me, to see that I ate nothing that could tend to discredit his reliance on my system. Leaving my mother still with her Austin, the good surgeon then took my arm, and, as soon as we were in the next room, shut the door carefully, wiped his forehead, and said—"I think we have saved him!"

"Would it really, then, have injured my father so much?"

"So much!—why, you foolish young man, don't you see that, with his ignorance of business, where he himself is concerned—though, for any other one's business, neither Rollick nor Cool has a better judgment—and with his d—d Quixotic spirit of honour

worked up into a state of excitement, he would have rushed to Mr Tibbets, and exclaimed 'How much do you owe? there it is!'—settled in the same way with these printers, and come back without a sixpence; whereas you and I can look coolly about us, and reduce the inflammation to the minimum!"

"I see, and thank you heartily, Squills."

"Besides," said the surgeon, with more feeling, "your father has really been making a noble effort over himself. He suffers more than you would think—not for himself, (for I do believe that, if he were alone in the world, he would be quite contented if he could save fifty pounds a-year and his books,) but for your mother and yourself; and a fresh access of emotional excitement, all the nervous anxiety of a journey to London on such a business, might have ended in a paralytic or epileptic affection. Now, we have him here snug; and the worst news we can give him will be better than what he will make up his mind for. But you don't eat."

"Eat! How can I? My poor father!"

"The effect of grief upon the gastric juices, through the nervous system, is very remarkable," said Mr Squills, philosophically, and helping himself to a broiled bone; "it increases the thirst, while it takes away hunger. No—don't touch Port!—heating! Sherry and water."

## CHAPTER IV.

THE house-door had closed upon Mr Squills—that gentleman having promised to breakfast with me the next morning, so that we might take the coach from our gate—and I remained alone, seated by the supper-table, and revolving all I had heard, when my father walked in.

"Pisistratus," said he, gravely, and looking round him, "your mother!—suppose the worst—your first care, then, must be to try and secure something for her. You and I are men—we can never want, while we have health of mind and body; but a woman—and if anything happens to me"—

My father's lip writhed as it uttered these brief sentences.

"My dear, dear father!" said I, suppressing my tears with difficulty, "all evils, as you yourself said, look worse by anticipation. It is impossible that your whole fortune can be involved. The newspaper did

not run many weeks; and only the first volume of your work is printed. Besides, there must be other shareholders who will pay their quota. Believe me, I feel sanguine as to the result of my embassy. As for my poor mother, it is not the loss of fortune that will wound her—depend on it, she thinks very little of that; it is the loss of your confidence."

"My confidence!"

"Ah yes! tell her all your fears, as your hopes. Do not let your affectionate pity exclude her from one corner of your heart."

"It is that—it is *that*, Austin,—my husband—my joy—my pride—my soul—my all!" cried a soft, broken voice.

My mother had crept in, unobserved by us.

My father looked at us both, and the tears which had before stood in his eyes forced their way. Then opening his arms—into which his Kitty threw herself joyfully—he lifted those moist eyes upward, and, by the movement of his lips, I saw that he thanked God.

I stole out of the room. I felt that those two hearts should be left to beat and to blend alone. And from that hour, I am convinced that Augustine Caxton acquired a stouter philosophy than that of the stoics. The fortitude that concealed pain was no longer needed, for the pain was no longer felt.

## CHAPTER V.

Mr Squills and I performed our journey without adventure, and, as we were not alone on the coach, with little conversation. We put up at a small inn at the city, and the next morning I sallied forth to see Trevanion—for we agreed that he would be the best person to advise us. But, on arriving at St James's Square, I had the disappointment of hearing that the whole family had gone to Paris three days before, and were not expected to return till the meeting of Parliament.

This was a sad discouragement, for I had counted much on Trevanion's clear head, and that extraordinary range of accomplishment in all matters of business —all that related to practical life—which my old patron pre-eminently possessed. The next thing would be to find Trevanion's lawyer, (for Trevanion was one of those men whose solicitors are sure to be able and active.) But the fact was, that he left so

little to lawyers, that he had never had occasion to communicate with one since I had known him; and I was therefore in ignorance of the very name of his solicitor; nor could the porter, who was left in charge of the house, enlighten me. Luckily, I bethought myself of Sir Sedley Beaudesert, who could scarcely fail to give me the information required, and who, at all events, might recommend me some other lawyer. So to him I went.

I found Sir Sedley at breakfast with a young gentleman who seemed about twenty. The good baronet was delighted to see me; but I thought it was with a little confusion, rare to his cordial ease, that he presented me to his cousin, Lord Castleton. It was a name familiar to me, though I had never before met its patrician owner.

The Marquis of Castleton was indeed a subject of envy to young idlers, and afforded a theme of interest to gray-beard politicians. Often had I heard of "that lucky fellow Castleton," who, when of age, would step into one of those colossal fortunes which would realise the dreams of Aladdin—a fortune that had been out to nurse since his minority. Often had I heard graver gossips wonder whether Castleton would take any active part in public life—whether he would keep up the family influence. His mother (still alive) was a superior woman, and had devoted herself, from his

childhood, to supply a father's loss, and fit him for his great position. It was said that he was clever—had been educated by a tutor of great academic distinction, and was reading for a double first class at Oxford. This young marquis was indeed the head of one of those few houses still left in England that retain feudal importance. He was important, not only from his rank and his vast fortune, but from an immense circle of powerful connexions; from the ability of his two predecessors, who had been keen politicians and cabinet-ministers; from the *prestige* they had bequeathed to his name; from the peculiar nature of his property, which gave him the returning interest in no less than six parliamentary seats in Great Britain and Ireland—besides that indirect ascendency which the head of the Castletons had always exercised over many powerful and noble allies of that princely house. I was not aware that he was related to Sir Sedley, whose world of action was so remote from politics; and it was with some surprise that I now heard that announcement, and certainly with some interest that I, perhaps from the verge of poverty, gazed on this young heir of fabulous El-Dorados.

It was easy to see that Lord Castleton had been brought up with a careful knowledge of his future greatness, and its serious responsibilities. He stood immeasurably aloof from all the affectations common

to the youth of minor patricians. He had not been taught to value himself on the cut of a coat, or the shape of a hat. His world was far above St James's Street and the clubs. He was dressed plainly, though in a style peculiar to himself—a white neckcloth, (which was not at that day quite so uncommon for morning use as it is now,) trousers without straps, thin shoes and gaiters. There was nothing in his manner of the supercilious apathy which characterises the dandy introduced to some one whom he doubts if he can nod to from the bow-window at White's—none of such vulgar coxcombries had Lord Castleton; and yet a young gentleman more emphatically coxcomb it was impossible to see. He had been told, no doubt, that, as the head of a house which was almost in itself a party in the state, he should be bland and civil to all men; and this duty being grafted upon a nature singularly cold and unsocial, gave to his politeness something so stiff, yet so condescending, that it brought the blood to one's cheek—though the momentary anger was counterbalanced by something almost ludicrous in the contrast between this gracious majesty of deportment, and the insignificant figure, with the boyish beardless face, by which it was assumed. Lord Castleton did not content himself with a mere bow at our introduction. Much to my wonder how he came by the information he displayed,

he made me a little speech after the manner of Louis XIV. to a provincial noble—studiously modelled upon that royal maxim of urbane policy which instructs a king that he should know something of the birth, parentage, and family, of his meanest gentleman. It was a little speech, in which my father's learning, and my uncle's services, and the amiable qualities of your humble servant, were neatly interwoven—delivered in a falsetto tone, as if learned by heart, though it must have been necessarily impromptu; and then, reseating himself, he made a gracious motion of the head and hand, as if to authorise me to do the same.

Conversation succeeded, by galvanic jerks and spasmodic starts — a conversation that Lord Castleton contrived to tug so completely out of poor Sir Sedley's ordinary course of small and polished small-talk, that that charming personage, accustomed, as he well deserved, to be Coryphæus at his own table, was completely silenced. With his light reading, his rich stores of anecdote, his good-humoured knowledge of the drawing-room world, he had scarce a word that would fit into the great, rough, serious matters which Lord Castleton threw upon the table, as he nibbled his toast. Nothing but the most grave and practical subjects of human interest seemed to attract this future leader of mankind. The fact is that Lord Castleton had been taught everything that relates to *property*—

(a knowledge which embraces a very wide circumference.) It had been said to him, "You will be an immense proprietor—knowledge is essential to your self-preservation. You will be puzzled, bubbled, ridiculed, duped every day of your life, if you do not make yourself acquainted with all by which property is assailed or defended, impoverished or increased. You have a vast stake in the country—you must learn all the interests of Europe—nay, of the civilised world—for those interests react on the country, and the interests of the country are of the greatest possible consequence to the interests of the Marquis of Castleton." Thus the state of the Continent—the policy of Metternich—the condition of the Papacy—the growth of Dissent—the proper mode of dealing with the general spirit of Democracy, which was the epidemic of European monarchies—the relative proportions of the agricultural and manufacturing population—corn-laws, currency, and the laws that regulate wages—a criticism on the leading speakers of the House of Commons, with some discursive observations on the importance of fattening cattle—the introduction of flax into Ireland—emigration—the condition of the poor—the doctrines of Mr Owen—the pathology of potatoes; the connexion between potatoes, pauperism, and patriotism; these, and suchlike stupendous subjects for reflection—all branching, more or less intri-

cately, from the single idea of the Castleton property —the young lord discussed and disposed of in half-a-dozen prim, poised sentences—evincing, I must say in justice, no inconsiderable information, and a mighty solemn turn of mind. The oddity was, that the subjects so selected and treated should not come rather from some young barrister, or mature political economist, than from so gorgeous a lily of the field. Of a man less elevated in rank one would certainly have said—"Cleverish, but a prig;" but there really was something so respectable in a personage born to such fortunes, and having nothing to do but to bask in the sunshine, voluntarily taking such pains with himself, and condescending to identify his own interests—the interests of the Castleton property—with the concerns of his lesser fellow-mortals, that one felt the young marquis had in him the stuff to become a very considerable man.

Poor Sir Sedley, to whom all these matters were as unfamiliar as the theology of the Talmud, after some vain efforts to slip the conversation into easier grooves, fairly gave in, and, with a compassionate smile on his handsome countenance, took refuge in his easy-chair and the contemplation of his snuff-box.

At last, to our great relief, the servant announced Lord Castleton's carriage; and with another speech of overpowering affability to me, and a cold shake of

the hand to Sir Sedley, Lord Castleton went his way.

The breakfast parlour looked on the street, and I turned mechanically to the window as Sir Sedley followed his guest out of the room. A travelling carriage, with four post-horses, was at the door; and a servant, who looked like a foreigner, was in waiting with his master's cloak. As I saw Lord Castleton step into the street, and wrap himself in his costly mantle lined with sables, I observed, more than I had while he was in the room, the enervate slightness of his frail form, and the more than paleness of his thin joyless face; and then, instead of envy, I felt compassion for the owner of all this pomp and grandeur—felt that I would not have exchanged my hardy health, and easy humour, and vivid capacities of enjoyment in things the slightest and most within the reach of all men, for the wealth and greatness which that poor youth perhaps deserved the more for putting them so little to the service of pleasure.

"Well," said Sir Sedley, "and what do you think of him?"

"He is just the sort of man Trevanion would like," said I evasively.

"That is true," answered Sir Sedley, in a serious tone of voice, and looking at me somewhat earnestly. "Have you heard?—but no, you cannot have heard yet."

"Heard what?"

"My dear young friend," said the kindest and most delicate of all fine gentlemen, sauntering away that he might not observe the emotion he caused, "Lord Castleton is going to Paris to join the Trevanions. The object Lady Ellinor has had at heart for many a long year is won, and our pretty Fanny will be Marchioness of Castleton when her betrothed is of age—that is, in six months. The two mothers have settled it all between them!"

I made no answer, but continued to look out of the window.

"This alliance," resumed Sir Sedley, "was all that was wanting to assure Trevanion's position. When parliament meets, he will have some great office. Poor man! how I shall pity him! It is extraordinary to me," continued Sir Sedley, benevolently going on, that I might have full time to recover myself, "how contagious that disease called business is in our foggy England! Not only Trevanion, you see, has the complaint in its very worst and most complicated form, but that poor dear cousin of mine, who is so young, (here Sir Sedley sighed,) and might enjoy himself so much, is worse than you were when Trevanion was fagging you to death. But, to be sure, a great name and position, like Castleton's, must be a very heavy affliction to a conscientious mind. You

see how the sense of its responsibilities has *aged* him already—positively, two great wrinkles under his eyes. Well, after all, I admire him, and respect his tutor: a soil naturally very thin, I suspect, has been most carefully cultivated; and Castleton, with Trevanion's help, will be the first man in the peerage—prime minister some day, I dare say. And when I think of it, how grateful I ought to feel to his father and mother, who produced him quite in their old age; for, if he had not been born, I should have been the most miserable of men—yes, positively, that horrible marquisate would have come to me! I never think over Horace Walpole's regrets, when he got the earldom of Orford, without the deepest sympathy, and without a shudder at the thought of what my dear Lady Castleton was kind enough to save me from—all owing to the Ems waters, after twenty years' marriage! Well, my young friend, and how are all at home?"

As when, some notable performer not having yet arrived behind the scenes, or having to change his dress, or not having yet quite recovered an unlucky extra tumbler of exciting fluids—and the green curtain has therefore unduly delayed its ascent—you perceive that the thorough-bass in the orchestra charitably devotes himself to a prelude of astonishing prolixity, calling in *Lodoiska* or *Der Freischutz* to

beguile the time, and allow the procrastinating histrio leisure sufficient to draw on his flesh-coloured pantaloons, and give himself the proper complexion for a Coriolanus or Macbeth—even so had Sir Sedley made that long speech, requiring no rejoinder, till he saw the time had arrived when he could artfully close with the flourish of a final interrogative, in order to give poor Pisistratus Caxton all preparation to compose himself, and step forward. There is certainly something of exquisite kindness, and thoughtful benevolence, in that rarest of gifts,—*fine breeding;* and when now, remanned and resolute, I turned round and saw Sir Sedley's soft blue eye shyly, but benignantly, turned to me—while, with a grace no other snuff-taker ever had since the days of Pope, he gently proceeded to refresh himself by a pinch of the celebrated Beaudesert mixture—I felt my heart as gratefully moved towards him as if he had conferred on me some colossal obligation. And this crowning question—"And how are all at home?" restored me entirely to my self-possession, and for the moment distracted the bitter current of my thoughts.

I replied by a brief statement of my father's involvement, disguising our apprehensions as to its extent, speaking of it rather as an annoyance than a possible cause of ruin, and ended by asking Sir Sedley to give me the address of Trevanion's lawyer.

The good baronet listened with great attention; and that quick penetration which belongs to a man of the world enabled him to detect, that I had smoothed over matters more than became a faithful narrator.

He shook his head, and, seating himself on the sofa, motioned me to come to his side; then, leaning his arm over my shoulder, he said in his seductive, winning way—

"We two young fellows should understand each other, when we talk of money matters. I can say to you what I could not say to my respectable senior—by three years; your excellent father. Frankly, then, I suspect this is a bad business. I know little about newspapers, except that I have to subscribe to one in my county, which costs me a small income; but I know that a London daily paper might ruin a man in a few weeks. And as for shareholders, my dear Caxton, I was once teased into being a shareholder in a canal that ran through my property, and ultimately ran off with £30,000 of it! The other shareholders were all drowned in the canal, like Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. But your father is a great scholar, and must not be plagued with such matters. I owe him a great deal. He was very kind to me at Cambridge, and gave me the taste for reading, to which I owe the pleasantest hours of my life. So, when you and the lawyers have found out what the

extent of the mischief is, you and I must see how we can best settle it.

"What the deuce! my young friend—I have no 'encumbrances,' as the servants, with great want of politeness, call wives and children. And I am not a miserable great landed millionnaire, like that poor dear Castleton, who owes so many duties to society that he can't spend a shilling, except in a grand way and purely to benefit the public. So go, my boy, to Trevanion's lawyer: he is mine too. Clever fellow—sharp as a needle. Mr Pike, in Great Ormond Street—name on a brass plate; and when he has settled the amount, we young scapegraces will help each other, without a word to the old folks."

What good it does to a man, throughout life, to meet kindness and generosity like this in his youth!

I need not say that I was too faithful a representative of my father's scholarly pride, and susceptible independence of spirit, to accept this proposal; and probably Sir Sedley, rich and liberal as he was, did not dream of the extent to which his proposal might involve him. But I expressed my gratitude, so as to please and move this last relict of the De Coverleys, and went from his house straight to Mr Pike's office, with a little note of introduction from Sir Sedley. I found Mr Pike exactly the man I had anticipated from Trevanion's character—short, quick, intelligent,

in question and answer; imposing, and somewhat domineering, in manner—not overcrowded with business, but with enough for experience and respectability; neither young nor old; neither a pedantic machine of parchment, nor a jaunty off-hand coxcomb of West End manners.

"It is an ugly affair," said he, "but one that requires management. Leave it all in my hands for three days. Don't go near Mr Tibbets, nor Mr Peck; and on Saturday next, at two o'clock, if you will call here, you shall know my opinion of the whole matter." With that Mr Pike glanced at the clock, and I took up my hat and went.

There is no place more delightful than a great capital, if you are comfortably settled in it—have arranged the methodical disposal of your time, and know how to take business and pleasure in due proportions. But a flying visit to a great capital, in an unsettled, unsatisfactory way—at an inn—an inn in the City, too—with a great worrying load of business on your mind, of which you are to hear no more for three days; and an aching, jealous, miserable sorrow at the heart, such as I had—leaving you no labour to pursue, and no pleasure that you have the heart to share in—oh, a great capital then is indeed forlorn, wearisome, and oppressive! It is the Castle of Indolence, not as Thomson built it, but as Beckford drew

in his Hall of Eblis—a wandering up and down, to and fro—a great awful space, with your hand pressed to your heart; and—oh for a rush on some half-tamed horse, through the measureless green wastes of Australia! That is the place for a man who has no home in the Babel, and whose hand is ever pressing to his heart, with its dull, burning pain.

Mr Squills decoyed me the second evening into one of the small theatres; and very heartily did Mr Squills enjoy all he saw, and all he heard. And while, with a convulsive effort of the jaws, I was trying to laugh too, suddenly in one of the actors, who was performing the worshipful part of a parish beadle, I recognised a face that I had seen before. Five minutes afterwards, I had disappeared from the side of Squills, and was amidst that strange world—BEHIND THE SCENES.

My beadle was much too busy and important to allow me a good opportunity to accost him, till the piece was over. I then seized hold of him, as he was amicably sharing a pot of porter with a gentleman in black shorts and a laced waistcoat, who was to play the part of a broken-hearted father in the Domestic Drama in Three Acts, that would conclude the amusements of the evening.

"Excuse me," said I apologetically; "but as the Swan pertinently observes,—'Should auld acquaintance be forgot?'"

"The Swan, sir!" cried the beadle aghast—"the Swan never demeaned himself by such d—d broad Scotch as that!"

"The Tweed has its swans as well as the Avon, Mr Peacock."

"St—st—hush—hush—h—u—sh!" whispered the beadle in great alarm, and eyeing me, with savage observation, under his corked eyebrows. Then, taking me by the arm, he jerked me away. When he had got as far as the narrow limits of that little stage would allow, Mr Peacock said—

"Sir, you have the advantage of me; I don't remember you. Ah! you need not look!—by gad, sir, I am not to be bullied,—it was all fair play. If you will play with gentlemen, sir, you must run the consequences."

I hastened to appease the worthy man.

"Indeed, Mr Peacock, if you remember, I refused to play with you; and, so far from wishing to offend you, I now come on purpose to compliment you on your excellent acting, and to inquire if you have heard anything lately of your young friend, Mr Vivian."

"Vivian?—never heard the name, sir. Vivian! Pooh, you are trying to hoax me; very good!"

"I assure you, Mr Peac"—

"St—st—How the deuce did you know that I was

once called Peac—that is, people called me Peac—A friendly nickname, no more—drop it, sir, or you 'touch me with noble anger!'"

"Well, well; 'the rose, by any name, will smell as sweet,' as the Swan, this time at least, judiciously observes. But Mr Vivian, too, seems to have other names at his disposal. I mean a young, dark, handsome man—or rather boy—with whom I met you in company by the roadside, one morning."

"O—h!" said Mr Peacock, looking much relieved, "I know whom you mean, though I don't remember to have had the pleasure of seeing you before. No; I have not heard anything of the young man lately. I wish I did know something of him. He was a 'gentleman in my own way.' Sweet Will has hit him off to a hair!—

'The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's eye, tongue, sword.'

Such a hand with a cue!—you should have seen him seek 'the bubble reputation at the *cannon's* mouth!' I may say," continued Mr Peacock, emphatically, "that he was a regular trump—trump!" he reiterated with a start, as if the word had stung him—"trump! he was a BRICK!"

Then fixing his eyes on me, dropping his arms, interlacing his fingers, in the manner recorded of Talma in the celebrated "Qu'en dis-tu?" he resumed in a hollow voice, slow and distinct—

"When—saw—you—him,—young m—m—a—n —nnn?"

Finding the tables thus turned on myself, and not willing to give Mr Peac— any clue to poor Vivian, (who thus appeared, to my great satisfaction, to have finally dropped an acquaintance more versatile than reputable,) I contrived, by a few evasive sentences, to keep Mr Peac—'s curiosity at a distance, till he was summoned in haste to change his attire for the domestic drama. And so we parted.

## CHAPTER VI.

I HATE law details as cordially as my readers can, and therefore I shall content myself with stating that Mr Pike's management, at the end, not of three days, but of two weeks, was so admirable, that Uncle Jack was drawn out of prison, and my father extracted from all his liabilities, by a sum two-thirds less than was first startlingly submitted to our indignant horror—and that, too, in a manner that would have satisfied the conscience of the most punctilious formalist, whose contribution to the national fund, for an omitted payment to the Income Tax, the Chancellor of the Exchequer ever had the honour to acknowledge. Still the sum was very large in proportion to my poor father's income; and what with Jack's debts, the claims of the Anti-Publisher Society's printer—including the very expensive plates that had been so lavishly bespoken, and in great part completed, for the *History of Human Error*—and, above all, the

liabilities incurred on *The Capitalist;* what with the *plant*, as Mr Peck technically phrased a great upas-tree of a total, branching out into types, cases, printing-presses, engines, &c., all now to be resold at a third of their value; what with advertisements and bills, that had covered all the dead walls by which rubbish might be shot, throughout the three kingdoms; what with the dues of reporters, and salaries of writers, who had been engaged for a year at least to *The Capitalist*, and whose claims survived the wretch they had killed and buried; what, in short, with all that the combined ingenuity of Uncle Jack and printer Peck could supply for the utter ruin of the Caxton family—even after all deductions, curtailments, and after all that one could extract in the way of just contribution from the least unsubstantial of those shadows called the shareholders—my father's fortune was reduced to little more than £8000, which being placed at mortgage, at 4 per cent, yielded just £372, 10s. a-year—enough for my father to live upon, but not enough to afford also his son Pisistratus the advantages of education at Trinity College, Cambridge. The blow fell rather upon me than my father, and my young shoulders bore it without much wincing.

This settled, to our universal satisfaction, I went to pay my farewell visit to Sir Sedley Beaudesert. He

had made much of me, during my stay in London. I had breakfasted and dined with him pretty often; I had presented Squills to him, who no sooner set eyes upon that splendid conformation, than he described his character with the nicest accuracy as the necessary consequence of such a development for the rosy pleasures of life, and whose philosophy delighted and consoled Sir Sedley. We had never once retouched on the subject of Fanny's marriage, and both of us tacitly avoided even mentioning the Trevanions. But in this last visit, though he maintained the same reserve as to Fanny, he referred without scruple to her father.

"Well, my young Athenian," said he, after congratulating me on the result of the negotiations, and endeavouring again in vain to bear at least some share in my father's losses—"well, I see I cannot press this farther; but at least I *can* press on you any little interest I may have, in obtaining some appointment for yourself in one of the public offices. Trevanion could of course be more useful, but I can understand that he is not the kind of man you would like to apply to."

"Shall I own to you, my dear Sir Sedley, that I have no taste for official employment? I am too fond of my liberty. Since I have been at my uncle's old tower, I account for half my character by the

Borderer's blood that is in me. I doubt if I am meant for the life of cities, and I have odd floating notions in my head, that will serve to amuse me when I get home, and may settle into schemes. And now, to change the subject, may I ask what kind of person has succeeded me as Mr Trevanion's secretary?"

"Why, he has got a broad-shouldered, stooping fellow, in spectacles and cotton stockings, who has written upon 'Rent,' I believe — an imaginative treatise in his case, I fear, for rent is a thing he could never have received, and not often been trusted to pay. However, he is one of your political economists, and wants Trevanion to sell his pictures, as 'unproductive capital.' Less mild than Pope's Narcissa, 'to make a wash,' he would certainly 'stew a child.' Besides this official secretary, Trevanion trusts, however, a good deal to a clever, good-looking young gentleman, who is a great favourite with him."

"What is his name?"

"His name?—oh, Gower—a natural son, I believe, of one of the Gower family."

Here two of Sir Sedley's fellow fine gentlemen lounged in, and my visit ended.

## CHAPTER VII.

"I SWEAR," cried my uncle, "that it *shall* be so." And with a big frown, and a truculent air, he seized the fatal instrument.

"Indeed, brother, it must not," said my father, laying one pale, scholarlike hand mildly on Captain Roland's brown, bellicose, and bony fist; and with the other, outstretched, protecting the menaced, palpitating victim.

Not a word had my uncle heard of our losses, until they had been adjusted, and the sum paid; for we all knew that the old tower would have been gone—sold to some neighbouring squire or jobbing attorney—at the first impetuous impulse of Uncle Roland's affectionate generosity. Austin endangered! Austin ruined!—he would never have rested till he came, cash in hand, to his deliverance. Therefore, I say, not till all was settled did I write to the Captain, and tell him gaily what had chanced. And, however

light I made of our misfortunes, the letter brought the Captain to the red brick house the same evening on which I myself reached it, and about an hour later. My uncle had not sold the tower, but he came prepared to carry us off to it *vi et armis*. We must live with him, and on him—let or sell the brick house, and put out the remnant of my father's income to nurse and accumulate. And it was on finding my father's resistance stubborn, and that hitherto he had made no way, that my uncle, stepping back into the hall, in which he had left his carpet-bag, &c., returned with an old oak case, and, touching a spring roller, out flew—the Caxton pedigree.

Out it flew—covering all the table, and undulating, Nile-like, till it had spread over books, papers, my mother's work-box, and the tea-service, (for the table was large and compendious, emblematic of its owner's mind)—and then, flowing on the carpet, dragged its slow length along, till it was stopped by the fender.

"Now," said my uncle solemnly, "there never have been but two causes of difference between you and me, Austin. One is over; why should the other last? Aha! I know why you hang back; you think that we may quarrel about it!"

"About what, Roland?"

"About it, I say—and I'll be d—d if we do!"

cried my uncle, reddening. "And I have been thinking a great deal upon the matter, and I have no doubt you are right. So I brought the old parchment with me, and you shall see me fill up the blank, just as you would have it. Now, then, you will come and live with me, and we can never quarrel any more."

Thus saying, Uncle Roland looked round for pen and ink; and, having found them—not without difficulty, for they had been submerged under the overflow of the pedigree—he was about to fill up the *lacuna*, or hiatus, which had given rise to such memorable controversy, with the name of "William Caxton, printer in the Sanctuary," when my father, slowly recovering his breath, and aware of his brother's purpose, intervened. It would have done your heart good to hear them—so completely, in the inconsistency of human nature, had they changed sides upon the question—my father now all for Sir William de Caxton, the hero of Bosworth; my uncle all for the immortal printer. And in this discussion they grew animated: their eyes sparkled, their voices rose—Roland's voice deep and thunderous, Austin's sharp and piercing. Mr Squills stopped his ears. Thus it arrived at that point, when my uncle doggedly came to the end of all argumentation—"I swear that it shall be so;" and my father, trying the last resource

of pathos, looked pleadingly into Roland's eyes, and said, with a tone soft as mercy, "Indeed, brother, it must not." Meanwhile the dry parchment crisped, creaked, and trembled in every pore of its yellow skin.

"But," said I, coming in, opportunely, like the Horatian deity, "I don't see that either of you gentlemen has a right so to dispose of my ancestry. It is quite clear that a man has no possession in posterity. Posterity may possess him; but deuce a bit will he ever be the better for his great great-grandchildren!"

SQUILLS.— Hear, hear!

PISISTRATUS (*warming.*)—But a man's ancestry is a positive property to him. How much, not only of acres, but of his constitution, his temper, his conduct, character, and nature, he may inherit from some progenitor ten times removed! Nay, without that progenitor would he ever have been born—would a Squills ever have introduced him into the world, or a nurse ever have carried him *upo kolpo?*

SQUILLS.—Hear, hear!

PISISTRATUS (*with dignified emotion.*)—No man, therefore, has a right to rob another of a forefather, with a stroke of his pen, from any motives, howsoever amiable. In the present instance, you will say, perhaps, that the ancestor in question is apocryphal—it may be the printer, it may be the knight. Granted;

but here, where history is in fault, shall a mere sentiment decide? While both are doubtful, my imagination appropriates both. At one time I can reverence industry and learning in the printer; at another, valour and devotion in the knight. This kindly doubt gives me two great forefathers; and, through them, two trains of idea that influence my conduct under different circumstances. I will not permit you, Captain Roland, to rob me of either forefather—either train of idea. Leave, then, this sacred void unfilled, unprofaned; and accept this compromise of chivalrous courtesy—while my father lives with the Captain, we will believe in the printer; when away from the Captain, we will stand firm to the knight."

"Good!" cried Uncle Roland, as I paused, a little out of breath.

"And," said my mother softly, "I do think, Austin, there is a way of settling the matter which will please all parties. It is quite sad to think that poor Roland, and dear little Blanche, should be all alone in the tower; and I am sure that we should be much happier altogether."

"There!" cried Roland, triumphantly. "If you are not the most obstinate, hardhearted, unfeeling brute in the world—which I don't take you to be—brother Austin, after that really beautiful speech of your wife's, there is not a word to be said farther."

"But we have not yet heard Kitty to the end, Roland."

"I beg your pardon a thousand times, ma'am—sister," said the Captain, bowing.

"Well, I was going to add," said my mother, "that we will go and live with you, Roland, and club our little fortunes together. Blanche and I will take care of the house, and we shall be just twice as rich together as we are separately."

"Pretty sort of hospitality that!" grunted the Captain. "I did not expect you to throw me over in that way. No, no; you must lay by for the boy there,—what's to become of him?"

"But we shall *all* lay by for him," said my mother simply; "you as well as Austin. We shall have more to save, if we have both more to spend."

"Ah, save!—that is easily said: there would be a pleasure in saving, then!" said the Captain mournfully.

"And what's to become of me?" cried Squills, very petulantly. "Am I to be left here, in my old age—not a rational soul to speak to, and no other place in the village where there's a drop of decent punch to be had! 'A plague on both your houses!' as the chap said at the theatre the other night."

"There's room for a doctor in our neighbourhood, Mr Squills," said the Captain. "The gentleman in

your profession who *does for us*, wants, I know, to sell the business."

"Humph," said Squills—"a horribly healthy neighbourhood, I suspect!"

"Why, it has that misfortune, Mr Squills; but with your help," said my uncle slily, "a great alteration for the better may be effected in that respect."

Mr Squills was about to reply, when ring—a-ting—ring—ting! there came such a brisk, impatient, make-one's-self-at-home kind of tintinnabular alarum at the great gate, that we all started up and looked at each other in surprise. Who could it possibly be? We were not kept long in suspense; for in another moment, Uncle Jack's voice, which was always very clear and distinct, pealed through the hall; and we were still staring at each other when Mr Tibbets, with a bran-new muffler round his neck, and a peculiarly comfortable great-coat—best double Saxony, equally new—dashed into the room, bringing with him a very considerable quantity of cold air, which he hastened to thaw, first in my father's arms, next in my mother's. He then made a rush at the Captain, who ensconced himself behind the dumb waiter with a "Hem! Mr—sir—Jack—sir—hem, hem!" Failing there, Mr Tibbets rubbed off the remaining frost upon his double Saxony against your humble servant; patted Squills

affectionately on the back, and then proceeded to occupy his favourite position before the fire.

"Took you by surprise, eh?" said Uncle Jack, unpealing himself by the hearth-rug. "But no—not by surprise; you must have known Jack's heart: you at least, Austin Caxton, who know everything—you must have seen that it overflowed with the tenderest and most brotherly emotions; that once delivered from that cursed Fleet, (you have no idea what a place it is, sir,) I could not rest, night or day, till I had flown here—here, to the dear family nest—poor wounded dove that I am!" added Uncle Jack pathetically, and taking out his pocket-handkerchief from the double Saxony, which he had now flung over my father's arm-chair.

Not a word replied to this eloquent address, with its touching peroration. My mother hung down her pretty head, and looked ashamed. My uncle retreated quite into the corner, and drew the dumb waiter after him, so as to establish a complete fortification. Mr Squills seized the pen that Roland had thrown down, and began mending it furiously—that is, cutting it into slivers—thereby denoting, symbolically, how he would like to do with Uncle Jack, could he once get him safe and snug under his manipular operations. I bent over the pedigree, and my father rubbed his spectacles.

The silence would have been appalling to another man: nothing appalled Uncle Jack.

Uncle Jack turned to the fire, and warmed first one foot, then the other. This comfortable ceremony performed, he again faced the company—and resumed musingly, and as if answering some imaginary observations—

"Yes, yes—you are right there—and a deuced unlucky speculation it proved too. But I was overruled by that fellow Peck. Says I to him—says I—'*Capitalist!* pshaw—no popular interest there—it don't address the great public! Very confined class the capitalists; better throw ourselves boldly on the people. Yes,' said I, 'call it the *anti*-Capitalist.' By Jove! sir, we should have carried all before us! but I was overruled. The *Anti-Capitalist!*—what an idea! Address the whole reading world there, sir: everybody hates the capitalist—everybody would have his neighbour's money. The *Anti-Capitalist!*—sir, we should have gone off, in the manufacturing towns, like wildfire. But what could I do?"—

"John Tibbets," said my father solemnly, "capitalist or anti-capitalist, thou hadst a right to follow thine own bent in either—but always provided it had been with thine own money. Thou seest not the thing, John Tibbets, in the right point of view; and a little repentance in the face of those thou hast

wronged, would not have misbecome thy father's son, and thy sister's brother!"—

Never had so severe a rebuke issued from the mild lips of Austin Caxton; and I raised my eyes with a compassionate thrill, expecting to see John Tibbets gradually sink and disappear through the carpet.

"Repentance!" cried Uncle Jack, bounding up, as if he had been shot. "And do you think I have a heart of stone, of pummy-stone!—do you think I don't repent? I have done nothing but repent—I shall repent to my dying day."

"Then there is no more to be said, Jack," cried my father, softening, and holding out his hand.

"Yes!" cried Mr Tibbets seizing the hand, and pressing it to the heart he had thus defended from the suspicion of being pummy—"yes,—that I should have trusted that dunderheaded, rascally curmudgeon Peck: that I should have let him call it *The Capitalist*, despite all my convictions, when the *Anti*——"

"Pshaw!" interrupted my father, drawing away his hand.

"John," said my mother gravely, and with tears in her voice, "you forget who delivered you from prison,—you forget whom you have nearly consigned to prison yourself,—you forg—"

"Hush, hush!" said my father, "this will never

do; and it is you who forget, my dear, the obligations I owe to Jack. He has reduced my fortune one half, it is true; but I verily think he has made the three hearts, in which lie my real treasures, twice as large as they were before. Pisistratus, my boy, ring the bell."

"My dear Kitty," cried Jack, whimperingly, and stealing up to my mother, "don't be so hard on me; I thought to make all your fortunes—I did, indeed."

Here the servant entered.

"See that Mr Tibbets' things are taken up to his room, and that there is a good fire," said my father.

"And," continued Jack, loftily, "I *will* make all your fortunes yet. I have it *here!*" and he struck his head.

"Stay a moment!" said my father to the servant, who had got back to the door. "Stay a moment," said my father, looking extremely frightened; "perhaps Mr Tibbets may prefer the inn!"

"Austin," said Uncle Jack with emotion, "if I were a dog, with no home but a dog-kennel, and you came to me for shelter, I would turn out—to give you the best of the straw!"

My father was thoroughly melted this time.

"Primmins will be sure to see everything is made comfortable for Mr Tibbets," said he, waving his hand to the servant. "Something nice for supper,

Kitty, my dear—and the largest punch-bowl. You like punch, Jack?"

"Punch, Austin!" said Uncle Jack, putting his handkerchief to his eyes.

The Captain pushed aside the dumb waiter, strode across the room, and shook hands with Uncle Jack; my mother buried her face in her apron, and fairly ran off; and Squills said in my ear, "It all comes of the biliary secretions. Nobody could account for this, who did not know the peculiarly fine organisation of your father's—liver!"

# PART TWELFTH.

# PART TWELFTH.

## CHAPTER I.

THE Hegira is completed—we have all taken roost in the old tower. My father's books have arrived by the waggon, and have settled themselves quietly in their new abode—filling up the apartment dedicated to their owner, including the bed-chamber and two lobbies. The duck also has arrived, under wing of Mrs Primmins, and has reconciled herself to the old stewpond; by the side of which my father has found a walk that compensates for the peach wall—especially as he has made acquaintance with sundry respectable carps, who permit him to feed them after he has fed the duck—a privilege of which (since, if any one else approaches, the carps are off in an instant) my father is naturally vain. All privileges are

valuable in proportion to the exclusiveness of their enjoyment.

Now, from the moment the first carp had eaten the bread my father threw to it, Mr Caxton had mentally resolved, that a race so confiding should never be sacrificed to Ceres and Primmins. But all the fishes on my uncle's property were under the special care of that Proteus Bolt—and Bolt was not a man likely to suffer the carps to earn their bread without contributing their full share to the wants of the community. But, like master, like man! Bolt was an aristocrat fit to be hung *à la lanterne*. He out-Rolanded Roland in the respect he entertained for sounding names and old families; and by that bait my father caught him with such skill, that you might see that, if Austin Caxton had been an angler of fishes, he could have filled his basket full any day, shine or rain.

"You observe, Bolt," said my father, beginning artfully, "that those fishes, dull as you may think them, are creatures capable of a syllogism; and if they saw that, in proportion to their civility to me, they were depopulated by you, they would put two and two together, and renounce my acquaintance."

"Is that what you call being silly Jems, sir?" said Bolt; "faith there is many a good Christian not half so wise!"

"Man," answered my father thoughtfully, "is an animal less syllogistical, or more silly-Jemmical, than many creatures popularly esteemed his inferiors. Yes, let but one of those Cyprinidæ, with his fine sense of logic, see that, if his fellow-fishes eat bread, they are suddenly jerked out of their element, and vanish for ever; and though you broke a quartern loaf into crumbs, he would snap his tail at you with enlightened contempt. If," said my father, soliloquising, "I had been as syllogistic as those scaly logicians, I should never have swallowed that hook, which—hum! there—least said soonest mended. But, Mr Bolt, to return to the Cyprinidæ."

"What's the hard name you call them 'ere carp, your honour?" asked Bolt.

"Cyprinidæ, a family of the section Malacoptergii Abdominales," replied Mr Caxton; "their teeth are generally confined to the Pharyngeans, and their branchiostegous rays are but few—marks of distinction from fishes vulgar and voracious."

"Sir," said Bolt, glancing to the stewpond, "if I had known they had been a family of such importance, I am sure I should have treated them with more respect."

"They are a very old family, Bolt, and have been settled in England since the fourteenth century. A younger branch of the family has established itself in

a pond in the gardens of Peterhoff, (the celebrated palace of Peter the Great, Bolt—an emperor highly respected by my brother, for he killed a great many people very gloriously in battle, beside those whom he sabred for his own private amusement.) And there is an officer or servant of the imperial household, whose task it is to summon those Russian Cyprinidæ to dinner, by ringing a bell, shortly after which, you may see the emperor and empress, with all their waiting ladies and gentlemen, coming down in their carriages to see the Cyprinidæ eat in state. So you perceive, Bolt, that it would be a republican, Jacobinical proceeding to stew members of a family so intimately associated with royalty."

"Dear me, sir!" said Bolt, "I am very glad you told me. I ought to have known they were genteel fish, they are so mighty shy—as all your real quality are."

My father smiled, and rubbed his hands gently; he had carried his point, and henceforth the Cyprinidæ of the section Malacoptergii Abdominales were as sacred in Bolt's eyes as cats and ichneumons were in those of a priest in Thebes.

My poor father! with what true and unostentatious philosophy thou didst accommodate thyself to the greatest change thy quiet, harmless life had known, since it had passed out of the brief burning cycle of the

passions. Lost was the home, endeared to thee by so many noiseless victories of the mind—so many mute histories of the heart—for only the scholar knoweth how deep a charm lies in monotony, in the old associations, the old ways, and habitual clockwork of peaceful time. Yet, the home may be replaced—thy heart built its home round it everywhere—and the old tower might supply the loss of the brick house, and the walk by the duck-pond become as dear as the haunts by the sunny peach wall. But what shall replace to thee the bright dream of thine innocent ambition,—that angel-wing which had glittered across thy manhood, in the hour between its noon and its setting? What replace to thee the Magnum Opus—the Great Book?—fair and broadspreading tree—lone amidst the sameness of the landscape—now plucked up by the roots! The oxygen was subtracted from the air of thy life. For be it known to you, O my compassionate readers, that with the death of the Anti-Publisher Society the blood-streams of the Great Book stood still—its pulse was arrested—its full heart beat no more. Three thousand copies of the first seven sheets in quarto, with sundry unfinished plates, anatomical, architectural, and graphic, depicting various developments of the human skull, (that temple of Human Error,) from the Hottentot to the Greek; sketches of ancient buildings, Cyclopean and Pelasgic; Pyramids, and Pur-tors,

all signs of races whose handwriting was on their walls; landscapes to display the influence of Nature upon the customs, creeds, and philosophy of men—here showing how the broad Chaldean wastes led to the contemplation of the stars; and illustrations of the Zodiac, in elucidation of the mysteries of symbol-worship; fantastic vagaries of earth fresh from the Deluge, tending to impress on early superstition the awful sense of the rude powers of nature; views of the rocky defiles of Laconia; Sparta, neighboured by the "silent Amyclæ," explaining, as it were, geographically, the iron customs of the warrior colony, (arch Tories, amidst the shift and roar of Hellenic democracies,) contrasted by the seas, and coasts, and creeks of Athens and Ionia, tempting to adventure, commerce, and change. Yea, my father, in his suggestions to the artist of those few imperfect plates, had thrown as much light on the infancy of earth and its tribes as by the "shining words" that flowed from his calm starry knowledge! Plates and copies, all rested now in peace and dust—"housed with darkness and with death," on the sepulchral shelves of the lobby to which they were consigned—rays intercepted—worlds incompleted. The Prometheus was bound, and the fire he had stolen from heaven lay imbedded in the flints of his rock. For so costly was the mould in which Uncle Jack and the Anti-Publisher Society had con-

trived to cast this Exposition of Human Error, that every bookseller shyed at its very sight, as an owl blinks at daylight, or human error at truth. In vain Squills and I, before we left London, had carried a gigantic specimen of the Magnum Opus into the back-parlours of firms the most opulent and adventurous. Publisher after publisher started, as if we had held a blunderbuss to his ear. All Paternoster Row uttered a "Lord deliver us!" Human Error found no man so egregiously its victim as to complete those two quartos, with the prospect of two others, at his own expense. Now, I had earnestly hoped that my father, for the sake of mankind, would be persuaded to risk some portion,—and that, I own, not a small one—of his remaining capital on the conclusion of an undertaking so elaborately begun. But there my father was obdurate. No big words about mankind, and the advantage to unborn generations, could stir him an inch. "Stuff!" said Mr Caxton peevishly. "A man's duties to mankind and posterity begin with his own son; and having wasted half your patrimony, I will not take another huge slice out of the poor remainder to gratify my vanity, for that is the plain truth of it. Man must atone for sin by expiation. By the book I have sinned, and the book must expiate it. Pile the sheets up in the lobby, so that at least one man may be wiser and humbler by the sight of Human Error,

every time he walks by so stupendous a monument of it."

Verily, I know not how my father could bear to look at those dumb fragments of himself—strata of the Caxtonian conformation lying layer upon layer, as if packed up and disposed for the inquisitive genius of some moral Murchison or Mantell. But, for my part, I never glanced at their repose in the dark lobby, without thinking, "Courage, Pisistratus! courage! there's something worth living for; work hard, grow rich, and the Great Book shall come out at last."

Meanwhile, I wandered over the country, and made acquaintance with the farmers, and with Trevanion's steward—an able man, and a great agriculturist—and I learned from them a better notion of the nature of my uncle's domains. Those domains covered an immense acreage, which, save a small farm, was of no value at present. But land of the same sort had been lately redeemed by a simple kind of draining, now well known in Cumberland; and, with capital, Roland's barren moors might become a noble property. But capital, where was that to come from? Nature gives us all except the means to turn her into marketable account. As old Plautus saith so wittily, "Day, night, water, sun, and moon, are to be had gratis; for everything else—down with your dust!"

## CHAPTER II.

NOTHING has been heard of Uncle Jack. Before we left the brick house, the Captain gave him an invitation to the tower—more, I suspect, out of compliment to my mother than from the unbidden impulse of his own inclinations. But Mr Tibbets politely declined it. During his stay at the brick house, he had received and written a vast number of letters—some of those he received, indeed, were left at the village post-office, under the alphabetical addresses of A B or X Y. For no misfortune ever paralysed the energies of Uncle Jack. In the winter of adversity he vanished, it is true, but even in vanishing he vegetated still. He resembled those *algæ*, termed the *Prolococcus nivales*, which give a rose-colour to the Polar snows that conceal them, and flourish unsuspected amidst the general dissolution of Nature. Uncle Jack, then, was as lively and sanguine as ever—though he began to let fall vague hints of intentions to abandon the

general cause of his fellow creatures, and to set up business henceforth purely on his own account; wherewith my father—to the great shock of my belief in his philanthropy—expressed himself much pleased. And I strongly suspect that, when Uncle Jack wrapped himself up in his new double Saxony, and went off at last, he carried with him something more than my father's good wishes in aid of his conversion to egotistical philosophy.

"That man will do yet," said my father, as the last glimpse was caught of Uncle Jack standing up on the stage-coach box, beside the driver—partly to wave his hand to us as we stood at the gate, and partly to array himself more commodiously in a box coat, with six capes, which the coachman had lent him.

"Do you think so, sir!" said I, doubtfully. "May I ask why?"

MR CAXTON.—On the cat principle—that he tumbles so lightly. You may throw him down from St Paul's, and the next time you see him he will be scrambling a-top of the Monument.

PISISTRATUS.—But a cat the most viparious is limited to nine lives—and Uncle Jack must be now far gone in his eighth.

MR CAXTON (*not heeding that answer, for he has got his hand in his waistcoat.*)—The earth, according to Apuleius, in his *Treatise on the Philosophy of Plato*,

was produced from right-angled triangles; but fire and air from the scalene triangle—the angles of which, I need not say, are very different from those of a right-angled triangle. Now I think there are people in the world of whom one can only judge rightly according to those mathematical principles applied to their original construction; for, if air or fire predominates in our natures, we are scalene triangles;—if earth, right-angled. Now, as air is so notably manifested in Jack's conformation, he is, *nolens volens*, produced in conformity with his preponderating element. He is a scalene triangle, and must be judged, accordingly, upon irregular, lop-sided principles; whereas you and I, commonplace mortals, are produced, like the earth, which is our preponderating element, with our triangles all right-angled, comfortable, and complete—for which blessing let us thank Providence, and be charitable to those who are necessarily windy and gaseous, from that unlucky scalene triangle upon which they have had the misfortune to be constructed, and which, you perceive, is quite at variance with the mathematical constitution of the earth!

PISISTRATUS.—Sir, I am very happy to hear so simple, easy, and intelligible an explanation of Uncle Jack's peculiarities; and I only hope that, for the future, the sides of his scalene triangle may never be produced to our rectangular conformations.

MR CAXTON (*descending from his stilts, with an air as mildly reproachful as if I had been cavilling at the virtues of Socrates.*)—You don't do your uncle justice, Pisistratus: he is a very clever man; and I am sure that, in spite of his scalene misfortune, he would be an honest one—that is, (added Mr Caxton, correcting himself,) not romantically or heroically honest—but honest as men go—if he could but keep his head long enough above water: but, you see, when the best man in the world is engaged in the process of sinking, he catches hold of whatever comes in his way, and drowns the very friend who is swimming to save him.

PISISTRATUS.—Perfectly true, sir; but Uncle Jack makes it his business to be *always* sinking!

MR CAXTON (*with naïveté.*)—And how could it be otherwise, when he has been carrying all his fellow creatures in his breeches' pockets! Now he has got rid of that deadweight, I should not be surprised if he swam like a cork.

PISISTRATUS (*who, since the Anti-Capitalist, has become a strong Anti-Jackian.*)—But if, sir, you really think Uncle Jack's love for his fellow creatures is genuine, that is surely not the worst part of him!

MR CAXTON.—O literal ratiocinator, and dull to the true logic of Attic irony! can't you comprehend that an affection may be genuine as felt by the man,

yet its nature be spurious in relation to others? A man may genuinely believe he loves his fellow creatures, when he roasts them like Torquemada, or guillotines them like St Just! Happily Jack's scalene triangle, being more produced from air than from fire, does not give to his philanthropy the inflammatory character which distinguishes the benevolence of inquisitors and revolutionists. The philanthropy, therefore, takes a more flatulent and innocent form, and expends its strength in mounting paper balloons, out of which Jack pitches himself, with all the fellow creatures he can coax into sailing with him. No doubt Uncle Jack's philanthropy is sincere, when he cuts the string and soars up out of sight; but the sincerity will not much mend their bruises when himself and fellow creatures come tumbling down, neck and heels. It must be a very wide heart that can take in all mankind—and of a very strong fibre, to bear so much stretching. Such hearts there are, Heaven be thanked!—and all praise to them! Jack's is not of that quality. He is a scalene triangle. He is not a circle! And yet, if he would but let it rest, it is a good heart—a very good heart," continued my father, warming into a tenderness quite infantine, all things considered. "Poor Jack! that was prettily said of him—'That if he were a dog, and he had no home but a dog-kennel, he would turn out to

give me the best of the straw!' Poor brother Jack!"

So the discussion was dropped; and, in the meanwhile, Uncle Jack, like the short-faced gentleman in the SPECTATOR, "*distinguished himself* by a profound silence."

## CHAPTER III.

BLANCHE has contrived to associate herself, if not with my more active diversions—in running over the country, and making friends with the farmers—still in all my more leisurely and domestic pursuits. There is about her a silent charm that it is very hard to define—but it seems to arise from a kind of innate sympathy with the moods and humours of those she loves. If one is gay, there is a cheerful ring in her silver laugh that seems gladness itself; if one is sad, and creeps away into a corner to bury one's head in one's hands, and muse—by-and-by—and just at the right moment—when one has mused one's fill, and the heart wants something to refresh and restore it, one feels two innocent arms round one's neck—looks up—and lo! Blanche's soft eyes, full of wistful compassionate kindness; though she has the tact not to question—it is enough for her to sorrow with your sorrow—she cares not to know more. A strange

child!—fearless, and yet seemingly fond of things that inspire children with fear—fond of tales of fay, sprite, and ghost—which Mrs Primmins draws fresh and new from her memory, as a conjuror draws pancakes hot and hot from a hat. And yet so sure is Blanche of her own innocence, that they never trouble her dreams in her lone little room, full of caliginous corners and nooks, with the winds moaning round the desolate ruins, and the casements rattling hoarse in the dungeon-like wall. She would have no dread to walk through the ghostly keep in the dark, or cross the churchyard, what time,

"By the moon's doubtful and malignant light,"

the grave-stones look so spectral, and the shade from the yew-trees lies so still on the sward. When the brows of Roland are gloomiest, and the compression of his lips makes sorrow look sternest, be sure that Blanche is couched at his feet, waiting the moment when, with some heavy sigh, the muscles relax, and she is sure of the smile if she climbs to his knee. It is pretty to chance on her gliding up broken turret stairs, or standing hushed in the recess of shattered windowless casements, and you wonder what thoughts of vague awe and solemn pleasure can be at work under that still little brow.

She has a quick comprehension of all that is taught

to her; she already tasks to the full my mother's educational arts. My father has had to rummage his library for books, to feed (or extinguish) her desire for "farther information;" and has promised lessons in French and Italian—at some golden time in the shadowy "By-and-By,"—which are received so gratefully that one might think Blanche mistook *Telemaque* and *Novelle Morali* for baby-houses and dolls. Heaven send her through French and Italian with better success than attended Mr Caxton's lessons in Greek to Pisistratus! She has an ear for music, which my mother, who is no bad judge, declares to be exquisite. Luckily there is an old Italian settled in a town ten miles off, who is said to be an excellent music-master, and who comes the round of the neighbouring squirearchy twice a-week. I have taught her to draw—an accomplishment in which I am not without skill—and she has already taken a sketch from nature, which, barring the perspective, is not so amiss; indeed, she has caught the notion of "idealising" (which promises future originality) from her own natural instincts, and given to the old witch-elm, that hangs over the stream, just the bough that it wanted to dip into the water, and soften off the hard lines. My only fear is, that Blanche should become too dreamy and thoughtful. Poor child, she has no one to play with! So I look out, and get her a dog

—frisky and young, who abhors sedentary occupations—a spaniel, small and coal-black, with ears sweeping the ground. I baptise him "Juba," in honour of Addison's Cato, and in consideration of his sable curls and Mauritanian complexion. Blanche does not seem so eerie and elf-like, while gliding through the ruins, when Juba barks by her side, and scares the birds from the ivy.

One day I had been pacing to and fro the hall, which was deserted; and the sight of the armour and portraits—dumb evidences of the active and adventurous lives of the old inhabitants, which seemed to reprove my own inactive obscurity—had set me off on one of those Pegaséan hobbies on which youth mounts to the skies—delivering maidens on rocks, and killing Gorgons and monsters — when Juba bounded in, and Blanche came after him, her straw hat in her hand.

BLANCHE.—I thought you were here, Sisty: may I stay?

PISISTRATUS.—Why, my dear child, the day is so fine, that instead of losing it in-doors, you ought to be running in the fields with Juba.

JUBA.—Bow—wow.

BLANCHE.—Will you come too? If Sisty stays in, Blanche does not care for the butterflies!

Pisistratus, seeing that the thread of his day-dreams

is broken, consents with an air of resignation. Just as they gain the door, Blanche pauses, and looks as if there were something on her mind.

PISISTRATUS.—What now, Blanche? Why are you making knots in that ribbon, and writing invisible characters on the floor with the point of that busy little foot?

BLANCHE (*mysteriously.*)—I have found a new room, Sisty. Do you think we may look into it?

PISISTRATUS.—Certainly, unless any Bluebeard of your acquaintance told you not. Where is it?

BLANCHE.—Up stairs—to the left.

PISISTRATUS.—That little old door, going down two stone steps, which is always kept locked?

BLANCHE.—Yes! it is not locked to-day. The door was ajar, and I peeped in; but I would not do more till I came and asked you if you thought it would not be wrong.

PISISTRATUS.—Very good in you, my discreet little cousin. I have no doubt it is a ghost-trap; however, with Juba's protection, I think we might venture together.

Pisistratus, Blanche, and Juba ascend the stairs, and turn off down a dark passage to the left, away from the rooms in use. We reach the arch-pointed door of oak planks nailed roughly together—we push

it open, and perceive that a small stair winds down from the room: it is just over Roland's chamber.

The room has a damp smell, and has probably been left open to be aired, for the wind comes through the unbarred casement, and a billet burns on the hearth. The place has that attractive, fascinating air which belongs to a lumber room, than which I know nothing that so captivates the interest and fancy of young people. What treasures, to them, often lie hid in those quaint odds and ends which the elder generations have discarded as rubbish! All children are by nature antiquarians and relic-hunters. Still there is an order and precision with which the articles in that room are stowed away that belies the true notion of lumber—none of the mildew and dust which give such mournful interest to things abandoned to decay.

In one corner are piled up cases, and military-looking trunks of outlandish aspect, with R. D. C. in brass nails on their sides. From these we turn with involuntary respect, and call off Juba, who has wedged himself behind in pursuit of some imaginary mouse. But in the other corner is what seems to me a child's cradle—not an English one evidently: it is of wood, seemingly Spanish rosewood, with a rail-work at the back, of twisted columns; and I should scarcely have known it to be a cradle but for the

fairy-like quilt and the tiny pillows, which proclaimed its uses.

On the wall above the cradle were arranged sundry little articles, that had, perhaps, once made the joy of a child's heart—broken toys with the paint rubbed off, a tin sword and trumpet, and a few tattered books, mostly in Spanish—by their shape and look, doubtless, children's books. Near these stood, on the floor, a picture with its face to the wall. Juba had chased the mouse that his fancy still insisted on creating, behind this picture, and, as he abruptly drew back, it fell into the hands I stretched forth to receive it. I turned the face to the light, and was surprised to see merely an old family portrait; it was that of a gentleman in the flowered vest and stiff ruff which referred the date of his existence to the reign of Elizabeth—a man with a bold and noble countenance. On the corner was placed a faded coat of arms, beneath which was inscribed, "HERBERT DE CAXTON, EQ: AUR: ÆTAT: 35."

On the back of the canvass I observed, as I now replaced the picture against the wall, a label in Roland's handwriting, though in a younger and more running hand than he now wrote. The words were these:—"The best and bravest of our line. He charged by Sidney's side on the field of Zutphen; he fought in Drake's ship against the armament of Spain.

If ever I have a——" The rest of the label seemed to have been torn off.

I turned away, and felt a remorseful shame that I had so far gratified my curiosity,—if by so harsh a name the powerful interest that had absorbed me must be called. I looked round for Blanche; she had retreated from my side to the door, and, with her hands before her eyes, was weeping. As I stole towards her, my glance fell on a book that lay on a chair near the casement, and beside those relics of an infancy once pure and serene. By the old-fashioned silver clasps, I recognised Roland's Bible. I felt almost as if I had been guilty of profanation in my thoughtless intrusion. I drew away Blanche, and we descended the stairs noiselessly; and not till we were on our favourite spot, amidst a heap of ruins on the feudal justice-hill, did I seek to kiss away her tears and ask the cause.

"My poor brother!" sobbed Blanche; "they must have been his—and we shall never, never see him again!—and poor papa's Bible, which he reads when he is very, very sad! I did not weep enough when my brother died. I know better what death is now! Poor papa! poor papa! Don't die, too, Sisty!"

There was no running after butterflies that morning; and it was long before I could soothe Blanche. Indeed, she bore the traces of dejection in her soft

looks for many, many days; and she often asked me, sighingly, "Don't you think it was very wrong in me to take you there?" Poor little Blanche, true daughter of Eve, she would not let me bear my due share of the blame; she would have it all in Adam's primitive way of justice—"The woman tempted me, and I did eat." And since then Blanche has seemed more fond than ever of Roland, and comparatively deserts me, to nestle close to him, and closer, till he looks up and says, "My child, you are pale; go and run after the butterflies;" and she says now to him, not to me—"Come too!" drawing him out into the sunshine with a hand that will not loose its hold.

Of all Roland's line this Herbert de Caxton was "the best and bravest!" yet he had never named that ancestor to me—never put any forefather in comparison with the dubious and mythical Sir William. I now remembered once, that, in going over the pedigree, I had been struck by the name of Herbert—the only Herbert in the scroll—and had asked, "What of him, uncle?" and Roland had muttered something inaudible and turned away. And I remembered also, that in Roland's room there was the mark in the wall where a picture of that size had once hung. It had been removed thence before we first came, but must have hung there for years to have left that mark on the wall;—perhaps suspended

by Bolt, during Roland's long Continental absence. "If ever I have a——" What were the missing words? Alas! did they not relate to the son—missed for ever, evidently not forgotten still?

## CHAPTER IV.

My uncle sat on one side the fireplace, my mother on the other; and I, at a small table between them, prepared to note down the results of their conference; for they had met in high council, to assess their joint fortunes—determine what should be brought into the common stock, and set apart for the civil list, and what should be laid aside as a sinking-fund. Now my mother, true woman as she was, had a womanly love of show in her own quiet way—of making "a genteel figure" in the eyes of the neighbourhood—of seeing that sixpence not only went as far as sixpence ought to go, but that, in the going, it should emit a mild but imposing splendour—not, indeed, a gaudy flash—a startling Borealian coruscation, which is scarcely within the modest and placid idiosyncracies of sixpence—but a gleam of gentle and benign light, just to show where a sixpence had been, and allow you time to say "Behold!" before

"The jaws of darkness did devour it up."

Thus, as I once before took occasion to apprise the reader, we had always held a very respectable position in the neighbourhood round our square brick house; been as sociable as my father's habits would permit; given our little tea-parties, and our occasional dinners, and, without attempting to vie with our richer associates, there had always been so exquisite a neatness, so notable a housekeeping, so thoughtful a disposition, in short, of all the properties indigenous to a well-spent sixpence, in my mother's management, that there was not an old maid within seven miles of us who did not pronounce our tea-parties to be perfect; and the great Mrs Rollick, who gave forty guineas a-year to a professed cook and housekeeper, used regularly, whenever we dined at Rollick Hall, to call across the table to my mother, (who therewith blushed up to her ears,) to apologise for the strawberry jelly. It is true that when, on returning home, my mother adverted to that flattering and delicate compliment, in a tone that revealed the self-conceit of the human heart, my father—whether to sober his Kitty's vanity into a proper and Christian mortification of spirit, or from that strange shrewdness which belonged to him — would remark that Mrs Rollick was of a querulous nature; that the compliment was meant not to please my mother, but to spite the professed cook and housekeeper, to whom

the butler would be sure to repeat the invidious apology.

In settling at the tower, and assuming the head of its establishment, my mother was naturally anxious that, poor battered invalid though the tower was, it should still put its best leg foremost. Sundry cards, despite the thinness of the neighbourhood, had been left at the door; various invitations, which my uncle had hitherto declined, had greeted his occupation of the ancestral ruin, and had become more numerous since the news of our arrival had gone abroad; so that my mother saw before her a very suitable field for her hospitable accomplishments—a reasonable ground for her ambition that the tower should hold up its head, as became a tower that held the head of the family.

But not to wrong thee, O dear mother! as thou sittest there, opposite the grim Captain, so fair and so neat,—with thine apron as white, and thy hair as trim and as sheen, and thy morning cap, with its ribbons of blue, as coquettishly arranged as if thou hadst a fear that the least negligence on thy part might lose thee the heart of thine Austin—not to wrong thee by setting down to frivolous motives alone thy feminine visions of the social amenities of life, I know that thine heart, in its provident tenderness, was quite as much interested as ever thy vanities

could be, in the hospitable thoughts on which thou wert intent. For, first and foremost, it was the wish of thy soul that thine Austin might, as little as possible, be reminded of the change in his fortunes,—might miss as little as possible those interruptions to his abstracted scholarly moods, at which, it is true, he used to fret and to pshaw and to cry Papæ! but which nevertheless always did him good, and freshened up the stream of his thoughts. And, next, it was the conviction of thine understanding that a little society, and boon companionship, and the proud pleasure of showing his ruins, and presiding at the hall of his forefathers, would take Roland out of those gloomy reveries into which he still fell at times. And, thirdly, for us young people, ought not Blanche to find companions in children of her own sex and age? Already in those large black eyes there was something melancholy and brooding, as there is in the eyes of all children who live only with their elders; and for Pisistratus, with his altered prospects, and the one great gnawing memory at his heart—which he tried to conceal from himself, but which a mother (and a mother who had loved) saw at a glance — what could be better than such union and interchange with the world around us, small though that world might be, as woman, sweet binder and blender of all social links, might artfully effect?

—So that thou didst not go, like the awful Florentine,

"Sopra lor vanita che par persona,"

'over thin shadows that mocked the substance of real forms,' but rather it was the real forms that appeared as shadows or *vanita*.

What a digression!—can I never tell my story in a plain straightforward way? Certainly I was born under the Cancer, and all my movements are circumlocutory, sideways, and crab-like.

## CHAPTER V.

"I THINK, Roland," said my mother, "that the establishment is settled. Bolt, who is equal to three men at least; Primmins, cook and housekeeper; Molly, a good stirring girl—and willing, (though I've had some difficulty in persuading her, poor thing, to submit not to be called Anna Maria!) Their wages are but a small item, my dear Roland."

"Hem!" said Roland, "since we can't do with fewer servants at less wages, I suppose we must call it small."

"It is so," said my mother with mild positiveness. "And, indeed, what with the game and fish, and the garden and poultry-yard, and your own mutton, our housekeeping will be next to nothing."

"Hem!" again said the thrifty Roland, with a slight inflection of the beetle brows. "It may be next to nothing, ma'am—sister—just as a butcher's shop may be next to Northumberland House, but

there is a vast deal between nothing and that next neighbour you have given it."

This speech was so like one of my father's—so *naïve* an imitation of that subtle reasoner's use of the rhetorical figure called ANTANACLASIS, (or repetition of the same words in a different sense,) that I laughed and my mother smiled. But she smiled reverently, not thinking of the ANTANACLASIS, as, laying her hand on Roland's arm, she replied in the yet more formidable figure of speech called EPIPHONEMA, (or exclamation,) "Yet, with all your economy, you would have had us—"

"Tut!" cried my uncle, parrying the EPIPHONEMA with a masterly APOSIOPESIS (or breaking off;) "tut! if you had done what I wished, I should have had more pleasure for my money!"

My poor mother's rhetorical armoury supplied no weapon to meet that artful APOSIOPESIS; so she dropped the rhetoric altogether, and went on with that "unadorned eloquence" natural to her, as to other great financial reformers:—"Well, Roland, but I am a good housewife, I assure you, and—don't scold; but that you never do,—I mean, don't look as if you would like to scold; the fact is, that, even after setting aside £100 a-year for our little parties—"

"Little parties!—a hundred a-year!" cried the Captain aghast.

My mother pursued her way remorselessly,—"Which we can well afford; and without counting your half-pay, which you must keep for pocket-money and your wardrobe and Blanche's, I calculate that we can allow Pisistratus £150 a-year, which, with the scholarship he is to get, will keep him at Cambridge," (at that, seeing the scholarship was as yet amidst the Pleasures of Hope, I shook my head doubtfully;) "and," continued my mother, not heeding that sign of dissent, "we shall still have something to lay by."

The Captain's face assumed a ludicrous expression of compassion and horror; he evidently thought my mother's misfortunes had turned her head.

His tormentor continued.

"For," said my mother, with a pretty calculating shake of her head, and a movement of the right forefinger towards the five fingers of the left hand, "three hundred and seventy pounds—the interest of Austin's fortune—and fifty pounds that we may reckon for the rent of our house, make £420 a-year. Add your £330 a-year from the farm, sheep-walk, and cottages that you let, and the total is £750. Now, with all we get for nothing for our housekeeping, as I said before, we can do very well with five hundred a-year, and indeed make a handsome figure. So, after allowing Sisty £150, we still have £100 to lay by for Blanche."

"Stop, stop, stop!" cried the Captain, in great agitation; "who told you that I had £330 a-year?"

"Why, Bolt,—don't be angry with him."

"Bolt is a blockhead. From £330 a-year take £200, and the remainder is all my income, besides my half-pay."

My mother opened her eyes, and so did I.

"To that £130 add, if you please, £130 of your own. All that you have over, my dear sister, is yours or Austin's, or your boy's; but not a shilling can go to give luxuries to a miserly, battered old soldier. Do you understand me?"

"No, Roland," said my mother, "I don't understand you at all. Does not your property bring in £330 a-year?"

"Yes, but it has a debt of £200 a-year on it," said the Captain gloomily and reluctantly.

"Oh, Roland!" cried my mother tenderly, and approaching so near that, had my father been in the room, I am sure she would have been bold enough to kiss the stern Captain, though I never saw him look sterner and less kissable. "Oh, Roland!" cried my mother, concluding that famous EPIPHONEMA which my uncle's APOSIOPESIS had before nipped in the bud, "and yet you would have made us, who are twice as rich, rob you of this little all!"

"Ah!" said Roland, trying to smile, "but I should

have had my own way then, and starved you shockingly. No talk then of 'little parties,' and such-like. But you must not now turn the tables against me, nor bring your £420 a-year as a set-off to my £130."

"Why," said my mother generously, "you forget the money's worth that you contribute—all that your grounds supply, and all that we save by it. I am sure that that's worth a yearly £300 at the least."

"Madam—sister," said the Captain, "I'm sure you don't want to hurt my feelings. All I have to say is, that, if you add to what I bring an equal sum—to keep up the poor old ruin—it is the utmost that I can allow, and the rest is not more than Pisistratus can spend."

So saying, the Captain rose, bowed, and, before either of us could stop him, hobbled out of the room.

"Dear me, Sisty!" said my mother, wringing her hands, "I have certainly displeased him. How could I guess he had so large a debt on the property?"

"Did not he pay his son's debts? Is not that the reason that—"

"Ah!" interrupted my mother, almost crying, "and it was that which ruffled him, and I not to guess it? What shall I do?"

"Set to work at a new calculation, dear mother, and let him have his own way."

"But then," said my mother, "your uncle will mope himself to death, and your father will have no relaxation, while you see that he has lost his former object in his books. And Blanche—and you too. If we were only to contribute what dear Roland does, I do not see how, with £260 a-year, we could ever bring our neighbours round us! I wonder what Austin would say! I have half a mind—no, I'll go and look over the week-books with Primmins."

My mother went her way sorrowfully, and I was left alone.

Then I looked on the stately old hall, grand in its forlorn decay. And the dreams I had begun to cherish at my heart swept over me, and hurried me along, far, far away into the golden land, whither Hope beckons Youth. To restore my father's fortunes—reweave the links of that broken ambition which had knit his genius with the world—rebuild these fallen walls—cultivate those barren moors—revive the ancient name—glad the old soldier's age—and be to *both* the brothers what Roland had lost—a son! These were my dreams; and when I woke from them, lo! they had left behind an intense purpose, a resolute object. Dream, O youth!—dream manfully and nobly, and thy dreams shall be prophets!

## CHAPTER VI.

### LETTER FROM PISISTRATUS CAXTON, TO ALBERT TREVANION, ESQ., M.P.

(*The confession of a youth who, in the Old World, finds himself one too many.*)

"My dear Mr Trevanion,—I thank you cordially, and so we do all, for your reply to my letter, informing you of the villanous traps through which we have passed—not indeed with whole skins, but still whole in life and limb—which, considering that the traps were three, and the teeth sharp, was more than we could reasonably expect. We have taken to the wastes, like wise foxes as we are, and I do not think a bait can be found that will again snare the fox paternal. As for the fox filial, it is different, and I am about to prove to you that he is burning to redeem the family disgrace. Ah! my dear Mr Trevanion, if you are busy with 'blue books' when this letter reaches you, stop here, and put it aside for some rare

moment of leisure. I am about to open my heart to you, and ask you, who know the world so well, to aid me in an escape from those *flammantia mœnia*, wherewith I find that world begirt and enclosed. For look you, sir, you and my father were right when you both agreed that the mere book-life was not meant for me. And yet what is not book-life, to a young man who would make his way through the ordinary and conventional paths to fortune? All the professions are so book-lined, book-hemmed, book-choked, that wherever these strong hands of mine stretch towards action, they find themselves met by octavo ramparts, flanked with quarto crenellations. For first, this college life, opening to scholarships, and ending, perchance, as you political economists would desire, in Malthusian fellowships—premiums for celibacy—consider what manner of thing it is!

"Three years, book upon book,—a great Dead Sea before one, three years long, and all the apples that grow on the shore full of the ashes of pica and primer! Those three years ended, the fellowship, it may be, won,—still books—books—if the whole world does not close at the college gates. Do I, from scholar, effloresce into literary man, author by profession?—books—books! Do I go into the law?—books—books. *Ars longa, vita brevis*, which, paraphrased, means that it is slow work before one fags one's way

to a brief! Do I turn doctor? Why, what but books can kill time, until, at the age of forty, a lucky chance may permit me to kill something else? The church? (for which, indeed, I don't profess to be good enough,) —that is book-life *par excellence*, whether, inglorious and poor, I wander through long lines of divines and fathers; or, ambitious of bishopricks, I amend the corruptions, not of the human heart, but of a Greek text, and through defiles of scholiasts and commentators win my way to the See. In short, barring the noble profession of arms—which you know, after all, is not precisely the road to fortune—can you tell me any means by which one may escape these eternal books, this mental clockwork, and corporeal lethargy? Where can this passion for life that runs riot through my veins find its vent? Where can these stalwart limbs, and this broad chest, grow of value and worth, in this hot-bed of cerebral inflammation and dyspeptic intellect? I know what is in me; I know I have the qualities that should go with stalwart limbs and broad chest. I have some plain common sense, some promptitude and keenness, some pleasure in hardy danger, some fortitude in bearing pain—qualities for which I bless Heaven, for they are qualities good and useful in private life. But in the forum of men in the market of fortune, are they not *flocci, nauci, nihili?*

"In a word, dear sir and friend, in this crowded

Old World, there is not the same room that our bold forefathers found for men to walk about, and jostle their neighbours. No; they must sit down like boys at their form, and work out their tasks, with rounded shoulders and aching fingers. There has been a pastoral age, and a hunting age, and a fighting age. Now we have arrived at the age sedentary. Men who sit longest carry all before them: puny delicate fellows, with hands just strong enough to wield a pen, eyes so bleared by the midnight lamp that they see no joy in that buxom sun, (which draws me forth into the fields, as life draws the living,) and digestive organs worn and macerated by the relentless flagellation of the brain. Certainly, if this is to be the Reign of Mind, it is idle to repine, and kick against the pricks; but is it true that all these qualities of action that are within me are to go for nothing! If I were rich, and happy in mind and circumstance, well and good; I should shoot, hunt, farm, travel, enjoy life, and snap my fingers at ambition. If I were so poor and so humbly bred that I could turn gamekeeper or whipper-in, as pauper gentlemen virtually did of old, well and good too; I should exhaust this troublesome vitality of mine, by nightly battles with poachers, and leaps over double dykes and stone walls. If I were so depressed of spirit that I could live without remorse on my father's small means, and exclaim with Claudian,

'The earth gives me feasts that cost nothing,' well and good too; it were a life to suit a vegetable, or a very minor poet. But as it is!—here I open another leaf of my heart to you! To say that, being poor, I want to make a fortune, is to say that I am an Englishman. To attach ourselves to a thing positive, belongs to our practical race. Even in our dreams, if we build castles in the air, they are not *Castles of Indolence*,—indeed they have very little of the castle about them, and look much more like Hoare's Bank on the east side of Temple Bar! I desire, then, to make a fortune. But I differ from my countrymen, first, by desiring only what you rich men would call but a *small* fortune; secondly, in wishing that I may not spend my whole life in that said fortune-making. Just see, now, how I am placed.

"Under ordinary circumstances, I must begin by taking from my father a large slice of an income that will ill spare paring. According to my calculation, my parents and my uncle want all they have got—and the subtraction of the yearly sum on which Pisistratus is to live, till he can live by his own labours, would be so much taken from the decent comforts of his kindred. If I return to Cambridge, with all economy, I must thus narrow still more the *res angusta domi*—and when Cambridge is over, and I am turned loose upon the world—failing, as is likely enough, of the support

of a fellowship—how many years must I work, or rather, alas! not work, at the bar (which, after all, seems my best calling) before I can in my turn provide for those who, till then, rob themselves for me?—till I have arrived at middle life, and they are old and worn out—till the chink of the golden bowl sounds but hollow at the ebbing well! I would wish that, if I can make money, those I love best may enjoy it while enjoyment is yet left to them; that my father shall see *The History of Human Error*, complete, bound in russia on his shelves; that my mother shall have the innocent pleasures that content her, before age steals the light from her happy smile; that before Roland's hair is snow-white, (alas! the snows there thicken fast,) he shall lean on my arm, while we settle together where the ruin shall be repaired or where left to the owls; and where the dreary bleak waste around shall laugh with the gleam of corn:—for you know the nature of this Cumberland soil—you, who possess much of it, and have won so many fair acres from the wild:—you know that my uncle's land, now (save a single farm) scarce worth a shilling an acre, needs but capital to become an estate more lucrative than ever his ancestors owned. You know that, for you have applied your capital to the same kind of land, and, in doing so, what blessings—which you scarcely think of in your London library—you have effected!—what

mouths you feed, what hands you employ! I have calculated that my uncle's moors, which now scarce maintain two or three shepherds, could, manured by money, maintain two hundred families by their labour. All this is worth trying for! therefore Pisistratus wants to make money. Not so much! he does not require millions—a few spare thousand pounds would go a long way; and with a modest capital to begin with, Roland should become a true Squire, a real landowner, not the mere lord of a desert. Now then, dear sir, advise me how I may, with such qualities as I possess, arrive at that capital—ay, and before it is too late—so that money-making may not last till my grave.

"Turning in despair from this civilised world of ours, I have cast my eyes to a world far older,—and yet more to a world in its giant childhood. India here,—Australia there!—what say you, sir—you who will see dispassionately those things that float before my eyes through a golden haze, looming large in the distance? Such is my confidence in your judgment that you have but to say, 'Fool, give up thine El Dorados and stay at home—stick to the books and the desk—annihilate that redundance of animal life that is in thee—grow a mental machine—thy physical gifts are of no avail to thee—take thy place among the slaves of the Lamp"—and I will obey without

a murmur. But if I am right—if I have in me attributes that here find no market; if my repinings are but the instincts of nature, that, out of this decrepid civilisation, desire vent for growth in the young stir of some more rude and vigorous social system—then give me, I pray, that advice which may clothe my idea in some practical and tangible embodiments. Have I made myself understood?

"Rarely do we see a newspaper here, but occasionally one finds its way from the parsonage; and I have lately rejoiced at a paragraph that spoke of your speedy entrance into the administration as a thing certain. I write to you before you are a minister; and you see what I seek is not in the way of official patronage: A niche in an office!—oh, to me that were worse than all. Yet I did labour hard with you, but—*that* was different! I write to you thus frankly, knowing your warm noble heart—and as if you were my father. Allow me to add my humble but earnest congratulations on Miss Trevanion's approaching marriage with one worthy, if not of her, at least of her station. I do so as becomes one whom you have allowed to retain the right to pray for the happiness of you and yours.

"My dear Mr Trevanion, this is a long letter, and I dare not even read it over, lest, if I do, I should not send it. Take it with all its faults, and judge of it

with that kindness with which you have judged ever

"Your grateful and devoted servant,

"PISISTRATUS CAXTON."

LETTER FROM ALBERT TREVANION, ESQ., M. P., TO PISISTRATUS CAXTON.

*Library of the House of Commons, Tuesday Night.*

"My dear Pisistratus,—* * * * * is up! we are in for it for two mortal hours. I take flight to the library, and devote those hours to you. Don't be conceited, but that picture of yourself which you have placed before me has struck me with all the force of an original. The state of mind which you describe so vividly must be a very common one, in our era of civilisation, yet I have never before seen it made so prominent and life-like. You have been in my thoughts all day. Yes, how many young men must there be like you, in this Old World, able, intelligent, active, and persevering enough, yet not adapted for success in any of our conventional professions—'mute, inglorious Raleighs.' Your letter, young artist, is an illustration of the philosophy of colonising. I comprehend better, after reading it, the old Greek colonisation,—the sending out not only the paupers, the

refuse of an over-populated state, but a large proportion of a better class—fellows full of pith and sap, and exuberant vitality, like yourself, blending in those wise *cleruchiæ* a certain portion of the aristocratic with the more democratic element; not turning a rabble loose upon a new soil, but planting in the foreign allotments all the rudiments of a harmonious state, analogous to that in the mother country—not only getting rid of hungry craving mouths, but furnishing vent for a waste surplus of intelligence and courage, which at home is really not needed, and more often comes to ill than to good;—here only menaces our artificial embankments, but there, carried off in an aqueduct, might give life to a desert.

"For my part, in my ideal of colonisation, I should like that each exportation of human beings had, as of old, its leaders and chiefs—not so appointed from the mere quality of rank, often, indeed, taken from the humbler classes—but still men to whom a certain degree of education should give promptitude, quickness, *adaptability*—men in whom their followers can confide. The Greeks understood that. Nay, as the colony makes progress—as its principal town rises into the dignity of a capital—a *polis* that needs a polity—I sometimes think it might be wise to go still farther, and not only transplant to it a high standard of civilisation, but draw it more closely into connexion

with the parent state, and render the passage of spare intellect, education, and *civility*, to and fro, more facile, by draughting off thither the spare scions of royalty itself. I know that many of my more 'liberal' friends would pooh-pooh this notion; but I am sure that the colony altogether, when arrived to a state that would bear the importation, would thrive all the better for it. And when the day shall come (as to all healthful colonies it must come sooner or later) in which the settlement has grown an independent state, we may thereby have laid the seeds of a constitution and a civilisation similar to our own—with self-developed forms of monarchy and aristocracy, though of a simpler growth than old societies accept, and not left a strange motley chaos of struggling democracy—an uncouth livid giant, at which the Frankenstein may well tremble—not because it is a giant, but because it is a giant half completed.* Depend on it, the New World will be friendly or hostile to the Old, *not in proportion to the kinship of race, but in proportion to the similarity of manners and institutions*—a mighty truth, to which we colonisers have been blind.

* These pages were sent to press before the author had seen Mr Wakefield's recent work on Colonisation, wherein the views here expressed are enforced with great earnestness and conspicuous sagacity. The author is not the less pleased at this coincidence of opinion, because he has the misfortune to dissent from certain other parts of Mr Wakefield's elaborate theory.

"Passing from these more distant speculations to this positive present before us, you see already, from what I have said, that I sympathise with your aspirations—that I construe them as you would have me; —looking to your nature and to your objects, I give you my advice in a word—EMIGRATE!

"My advice is, however, founded on one hypothesis —viz., that you are perfectly sincere—you will be contented with a rough life, and with a moderate fortune at the end of your probation. Don't dream of emigrating if you want to make a million, or the tenth part of a million. Don't dream of emigrating, unless you can *enjoy* its hardships,—to *bear* them is not enough!

"Australia is the land for you, as you seem to surmise. Australia is the land for two classes of emigrants: 1st, The man who has nothing but his wits, and plenty of them; 2dly, The man who has a small capital, and who is contented to spend ten years in trebling it. I assume that you belong to the latter class. Take out £3000, and, before you are thirty years old, you may return with £10,000 or £12,000. If that satisfies you, think seriously of Australia. By coach, to-morrow, I will send you down all the best books and reports on the subject; and I will get you what detailed information I can from the Colonial Office. Having read these, and thought over them

dispassionately, spend some months yet among the sheep-walks of Cumberland; learn all you can, from all the shepherds you can find—from Thyrsis to Menalcas. Do more; fit yourself in every way for a life in the Bush, where the philosophy of the division of labour is not yet arrived at. Learn to turn your hand to everything. Be something of a smith, something of a carpenter—do the best you can with the fewest tools; make yourself an excellent shot; break in all the wild horses and ponies you can borrow and beg. Even if you want to do none of these things when in your settlement, the having learned to do them will fit you for many other things not now foreseen. *De-fine-gentlemanise* yourself from the crown of your head to the sole of your foot, and become the greater aristocrat for so doing; for he is more than an aristocrat, he is a king, who suffices in all things for himself—who is his own master, because he wants no *valetaille*. I think Seneca has expressed that thought before me; and I would quote the passage, but the book, I fear, is not in the library of the House of Commons. But now—(cheers, by Jove! I suppose * * * * * is down! Ah! it is so; and C—— is up, and that cheer followed a sharp hit at me. How I wish I were your age, and going to Australia with you!) But now—to resume my suspended period—but now to the important point—capital. You must

take that, unless you go as a shepherd, and then good-bye to the idea of £10,000 in ten years. So, you see, it appears at the first blush that you must still come to your father; but, you will say, with this difference, that you borrow the capital with every chance of repaying it, instead of frittering away the income year after year till you are eight-and-thirty or forty at least. Still, Pisistratus, you don't, in this, gain your object at a leap; and my dear old friend ought not to lose his son and his money too. You say you write to me as to your own father. You know I hate professions; and if you did not mean what you say, you have offended me mortally. As a father then, I take a father's rights, and speak plainly. A friend of mine, Mr Bolding, a clergyman, has a son—a wild fellow, who is likely to get into all sorts of scrapes in England, but with plenty of good in him, notwithstanding—frank, bold—not wanting in talent, but rather in prudence—easily tempted and led away into extravagance. He would make a capital colonist, (no such temptations in the Bush!) if tied to a youth like you. Now I propose, with your leave, that his father shall advance him £1500—which shall not, however, be placed in his hands, but in yours, as head partner in the firm. You, on your side, shall advance the same sum of £1500, which you shall borrow from me, for three years without interest. At the end of

that time interest shall commence, and the capital, with the interest on the said first three years, shall be repaid to me, or my executors, on your return. After you have been a year or two in the Bush, and felt your way, and learned your business, you may then safely borrow £1500 more from your father; and, in the meanwhile, you and your partner will have had together the full sum of £3000 to commence with. You see in this proposal I make you no gift, and I run no risk, even by your death. If you die insolvent, I will promise to come on your father, poor fellow!—for small joy and small care will he have then in what may be left of his fortune. There—I have said all; and I will never forgive you if you reject an aid that will serve you so much, and cost me so little.

"I accept your congratulations on Fanny's engagement with Lord Castleton. When you return from Australia you will still be a young man, she (though about your own years) almost a middle-aged woman, with her head full of pomps and vanities. All girls have a short period of girlhood in common; but when they enter womanhood, the woman becomes the woman of her class. As for me, and the office assigned to me by report, you know what I said when we parted, and—but here J—— comes, and tells me that 'I am expected to speak, and answer N——, who is just up,

brimful of malice,'—the House crowded, and hungering for personalities. So I, the man of the Old World, gird up my loins, and leave you with a sigh, to the fresh youth of the New—

'Ne tibi sit duros acuisse in prœlia dentes.'

"Yours affectionately,

"ALBERT TREVANION."

## CHAPTER VII.

So, reader, thou art now at the secret of my heart.

Wonder not that I, a bookman's son, and, at certain periods of my life, a bookman myself, though of lowly grade in that venerable class—wonder not that I should thus, in that transition stage between youth and manhood, have turned impatiently from books.—Most students, at one time or other in their existence, have felt the imperious demand of that restless principle in man's nature, which calls upon each son of Adam to contribute his share to the vast treasury of human deeds. And though great scholars are not necessarily, nor usually, men of action,—yet the men of action whom History presents to our survey, have rarely been without a certain degree of scholarly nurture. For the ideas which books quicken, books cannot always satisfy. And though the royal pupil of Aristotle slept with Homer under

his pillow, it was not that he might dream of composing epics, but of conquering new Ilions in the East. Many a man, how little soever resembling Alexander, may still have the conqueror's aim in an object that action only can achieve, and the book under his pillow may be the strongest antidote to his repose. And how the stern Destinies that shall govern the man weave their first delicate tissues amidst the earliest associations of the child!—Those idle tales with which the old credulous nurse had beguiled my infancy — tales of wonder, knight-errantry, and adventure, had left behind them seeds long latent—seeds that might never have sprung up above the soil—but that my boyhood was so early put under the burning-glass, and in the quick forcing-house, of the London world. There, even amidst books and study, lively observation and petulant ambition broke forth from the lush foliage of romance —that fruitless leafiness of poetic youth! And there passion, which is a revolution in all the elements of individual man, had called a new state of being, turbulent and eager, out of the old habits and conventional forms it had buried—ashes that speak where the fire has been. Far from me, as from any mind of some manliness, be the attempt to create interest by dwelling at length on the struggles against a rash and misplaced attachment, which it was my duty to over-

come; but all such love, as I have before implied, is a terrible unsettler:—

"Where once such fairies dance, no grass doth ever grow."

To re-enter boyhood, go with meek docility through its disciplined routine—how hard had I found that return, amidst the cloistered monotony of college! My love for my father, and my submission to his wish, had indeed given some animation to objects otherwise distasteful; but, now that my return to the University must be attended with positive privation to those at home, the idea became utterly hateful and repugnant. Under pretence that I found myself, on trial, not yet sufficiently prepared to do credit to my father's name, I had easily obtained leave to lose the ensuing college term, and pursue my studies at home. This gave me time to prepare my plans, and bring round—how shall I ever bring round to my adventurous views those whom I propose to desert? Hard it is to get on in the world—very hard! But the most painful step in the way is that which starts from the threshold of a beloved home.

How—ah, how, indeed! "No, Blanche, you cannot join me to-day; I am going out for many hours. So it will be late before I can be home."

Home!—the word chokes me! Juba slinks back

to his young mistress, disconsolate; Blanche gazes at me ruefully from our favourite hill-top, and the flowers she has been gathering fall unheeded from her basket. I hear my mother's voice singing low, as she sits at work by her open casement. How—ah, how, indeed!

# PART THIRTEENTH.

# PART THIRTEENTH.

## CHAPTER I.

ST CHRYSOSTOM, in his work on The Priesthood, defends deceit, if for a good purpose, by many Scriptural examples; ends his first book by asserting that it is often necessary, and that much benefit may arise from it, and begins his second book by saying that it ought not to be called *deceit*, but "*good management.*" *

Good management, then, let me call the innocent arts by which I now sought to insinuate my project into favour and assent with my unsuspecting family. And first I began with Roland. I easily induced him to read some of the books, full of the charm of Aus-

* Hohler's Translation.

tralian life, which Trevanion had sent me; and so happily did those descriptions suit his own erratic tastes, and the free, half-savage man that lay rough and large within that soldierly nature, that he himself, as it were, seemed to suggest my own ardent desire—sighed, as the careworn Trevanion had done, that "he was not my age," and blew the flame that consumed me with his own willing breath. So that when at last—wandering one day over the wild moors—I said, knowing his hatred of law and lawyers—

"Alas, uncle, that nothing should be left for me but the bar!"

Captain Roland struck his cane into the peat, and exclaimed, "Zounds, sir! the bar and lying, with truth and a world fresh from God before you!"

"Your hand, uncle — we understand each other. Now help me with those two quiet hearts at home!"

"Plague on my tongue! what have I done?" said the Captain, looking aghast. Then, after musing a little time, he turned his dark eye on me, and growled out,—"I suspect, young sir, you have been laying a trap for me; and I have fallen into it, like an old fool as I am."

"Oh, sir, if you prefer the bar!—"

"Rogue!"

"Or, indeed, I might perhaps get a clerkship in a merchant's office?"

"If you do, I well scratch you out of the pedigree!"

"Huzza, then, for Australasia!"

"Well, well, well," said my uncle,

"With a smile on his lip and a tear in his eye;"

"the old sea-king's blood will force its way—a soldier or a rover, there is no other choice for you. We shall mourn and miss you; but who can chain the young eagles to the eyrie?"

I had a harder task with my father, who at first seemed to listen to me as if I had been talking of an excursion to the moon. But I threw in a dexterous dose of the old Greek *Cleruchiæ*—cited by Trevanion—which set him off full trot on his hobby, till, after a short excursion to Eubœa and the Chersonese, he was fairly lost amidst the Ionian colonies of Asia Minor. I then gradually and artfully decoyed him into his favourite science of Ethnology; and while he was speculating on the origin of the American savages, and considering the rival claims of Cimmerians, Israelites, and Scandinavians, I said quietly,—"And you, sir, who think that all human improvement depends on the mixture of races—you, whose whole theory is an absolute sermon upon emigration, and the transplanting and interpolity of our species—you, sir, should be the last man to chain your son, your

elder son, to the soil, while your younger is the very missionary of rovers."

"Pisistratus," said my father, "you reason by synecdoche—ornamental, but illogical;" and therewith, resolved to hear no more, my father rose and retreated into his study.

But his observation, now quickened, began from that day to follow my moods and humours—then he himself grew silent and thoughtful, and finally he took to long conferences with Roland. The result was that, one evening in spring, as I lay listless amidst the weeds and fern that sprang up through the melancholy ruins, I felt a hand on my shoulder; and my father, seating himself beside me on a fragment of stone, said earnestly—"Pisistratus, let us talk—I had hoped better things from your study of Robert Hall."

"Nay, dear father, the medicine did me great good: I have not repined since, and I look steadfastly and cheerfully on life. But Robert Hall fulfilled his mission, and I would fulfil mine."

"Is there no mission in thy native land, O planeticose and exallotriote spirit?"* asked my father, with compassionate rebuke.

"Alas, yes! But what the impulse of genius is to the great, the instinct of vocation is to the mediocre.

* Words coined by Mr Caxton from πλανητικός, disposed to roaming, and ἐξαλλοτριόω, to export, to alienate.

In every man there is a magnet; in that thing which the man can do best there is a loadstone."

"Papæ!" said my father, opening his eyes; "and are no loadstones to be found for you nearer than the Great Australasian Bight?"

"Ah, sir, if you resort to irony, I can say no more!" My father looked down on me tenderly, as I hung my head moody and abashed.

"Son," said he, "do you think that there is any real jest at my heart when the matter discussed is whether you are to put wide seas and long years between us?" I pressed nearer to his side, and made no answer.

"But I have noted you of late," continued my father, "and I have observed that your old studies are grown distasteful to you; and I have talked with Roland, and I see that your desire is deeper than a boy's mere whim. And then I have asked myself what prospect I can hold out at home to induce you to be contented here, and I see none; and therefore I should say to you, 'Go thy ways, and God shield thee,'—but, Pisistratus, *your mother!*"

"Ah, sir, that is indeed the question! and there indeed I shrink. But, after all, whatever I were—whether toiling at the bar, or in some public office—I should be still so much from home and her. And then you, sir—she loves *you* so entirely, that——"

"No," interrupted my father; "you can advance no arguments like these to touch a mother's heart. There is but one argument that comes home there—Is it for your good to leave her? If so, there will be no need of farther words. But let us not decide that question hastily; let you and I be together the next two months. Bring your books and sit with me; when you want to go out, tap me on the shoulder and say 'Come.' At the end of those two months, I will say to you 'Go,' or 'Stay.' And you will trust me; and if I say the last, you will submit?"

"Oh yes, sir—yes!"

## CHAPTER II.

THIS compact made, my father roused himself from all his studies—devoted his whole thoughts to me—sought with all his gentle wisdom to wean me imperceptibly from my one fixed tyrannical idea, ranged through his wide pharmacy of books for such medicaments as might alter the system of my thoughts. And little thought he that his very tenderness and wisdom worked against him, for at each new instance of either my heart called aloud, "Is it not that thy tenderness may be repaid, and thy wisdom be known abroad, that I go from thee into the strange land, O my father!"

And the two months expired, and my father saw that the magnet had turned unalterably to the loadstone in the great Australasian Bight; and he said to me, "Go, and comfort your mother. I have told her your wish, and authorised it by my consent, for I believe now that it *is* for your good."

I found my mother in the little room she had appropriated to herself next my father's study. And in that room there was a pathos which I have no words to express; for my mother's meek, gentle, womanly soul spoke there, so that it was the Home of Home. The care with which she had transplanted from the brick house, and lovingly arranged all the humble memorials of old times, dear to her affections—the black silhouette of my father's profile cut in paper, in the full pomp of academics, cap and gown, (how had he ever consented to sit for it!) framed and glazed in the place of honour over the little hearth; and boyish sketches of mine at the Hellenic Institute, first essays in sepia and Indian ink, to animate the walls, and bring her back, when she sat there in the twilight musing alone, to sunny hours, when Sisty and the young mother threw daisies at each other;—and, covered with a great glass shade, and dusted each day with her own hand, the flower-pot Sisty had bought with the proceeds of the domino-box, on that memorable occasion on which he had learned "how bad deeds are repaired with good." There, in one corner, stood the little cottage piano, which I remembered all my life—old-fashioned, and with the jingling voice of approaching decrepitude, but still associated with such melodies as, after childhood, we hear never more! And in the modest hanging

shelves which looked so gay with ribbons, and tassels, and silken cords—my mother's own library, saying more to the heart than all the cold wise poets whose souls my father invoked in his grand Heraclea. The Bible over which, with eyes yet untaught to read, I had hung in vague awe and love, as it lay open on my mother's lap, while her sweet voice, then only serious, was made the oracle of its truths. And my first lesson-books were there, all hoarded. And bound in blue and gold, but elaborately papered up, *Cowper's Poems*—a gift from my father in the days of courtship—sacred treasure, which not even I had the privilege to touch; and which my mother took out only in the great crosses and trials of conjugal life, whenever some word less kind than usual had dropped unawares from her scholar's absent lips. Ah! all these poor household gods, all seemed to look on me with mild anger; and from all came a voice to my soul, "Cruel, dost thou forsake us!" And amongst them sat my mother, desolate as Rachel, and weeping silently.

"Mother! mother!" I cried, falling on her neck, "forgive me—it is past—I cannot leave you!"

## CHAPTER III.

"No—no! it is for your good—Austin says so. Go—it is but the first shock."

Then to my mother I opened the sluices of that deep I had concealed from scholar and soldier. To her I poured all the wild, restless thoughts which wandered through the ruins of love destroyed—to her I confessed what to myself I had scarcely before avowed. And when the picture of that, the darker, side of my mind was shown, it was with a prouder face, and less broken voice, that I spoke of the manlier hopes and nobler aims that gleamed across the wrecks and the desert, and showed me my escape.

"Did you not once say, mother, that you had felt it like a remorse, that my father's genius passed so noiselessly away,—half accusing the happiness you gave him for the death of his ambition in the content

of his mind? Did you not feel a new object in life when the ambition revived at last, and you thought you heard the applause of the world murmuring round your scholar's cell? Did you not share in the day-dreams your brother conjured up, and exclaim, 'If *my* brother could be the means of raising *him* in the world!' and when you thought we had found the way to fame and fortune, did you not sob out from your full heart, 'And it is *my* brother who will pay back to *his* son—all—all he gave up for me'?"

"I cannot bear this, Sisty!—cease, cease!"

"No; for do you not yet understand me? Will it not be better still, if *your son*—yours—restore to your Austin all that he lost, no matter how? If through your son, mother, you do indeed make the world hear of your husband's genius—restore the spring to his mind, the glory to his pursuits—if you rebuild even that vaunted ancestral name, which is glory to our poor sonless Roland—if your son can restore the decay of generations, and reconstruct from the dust the whole house into which you have entered, its meek presiding angel?—ah, mother! if this can be done, it will be your work; for unless you can share my ambition—unless you can dry those eyes, and smile in my face, and bid me go, with a cheerful

voice—all my courage melts from my heart, and again I say I cannot leave you!"

Then my mother folded her arms round me, and we both wept, and could not speak—but we were both happy.

## CHAPTER IV.

Now the worst was over, and my mother was the most heroic of us all. So I began to prepare myself in good earnest, and I followed Trevanion's instructions with a perseverance, which I could never, at that young day, have thrown into the dead life of books. I was in a good school amongst our Cumberland sheepwalks, to learn those simple elements of rural art which belong to the pastoral state. Mr Sidney, in his admirable *Australian Hand-Book*, recommends young gentlemen who think of becoming settlers in the Bush to bivouac for three months on Salisbury Plain. That book was not then written, or I might have taken the advice; meanwhile I think, with due respect to such authority, that I went through a preparatory training quite as useful in seasoning the future emigrant. I associated readily with the kindly peasants and craftsmen, who became my teachers. With what pride I presented my

father with a desk and my mother with a work-box, fashioned by my own hands! I made Bolt a lock for his plate-chest, and (that last was *my* magnum opus, my great masterpiece) I repaired and absolutely set going an old turret clock in the tower, that had stood at two P.M. since the memory of man. I loved to think, each time the hour sounded, that those who heard its deep chime would remember me. But the flocks were my main care. The sheep that I tended and helped to shear, and the lamb that I hooked out of the great marsh, and the three venerable ewes that I nursed through a mysterious sort of murrain, which puzzled all the neighbourhood—are they not written in thy loving chronicles, O House of Caxton!

And now, since much of the success of my experiment must depend on the friendly terms I could establish with my intended partner, I wrote to Trevanion, begging him to get the young gentleman who was to join me, and whose capital I was to administer, to come and visit us. Trevanion complied, and there arrived a tall fellow somewhat more than six feet high, answering to the name of Guy Bolding, in a cut-away sporting-coat, with a dog-whistle tied to the button-hole; drab shorts and gaiters, and a waistcoat with all manner of strange furtive pockets. Guy Bolding had lived a year and a half at Oxford as a "fast man;" so "fast" had he lived that there was

scarcely a tradesman at Oxford into whose books he had not contrived to run.

His father was compelled to withdraw him from the university, at which he had already had the honour of being plucked for "the little go;" and the young gentleman, on being asked for what profession he was fit, had replied with conscious pride, "That he could tool a coach!" In despair, the sire, who owed his living to Trevanion, had asked the statesman's advice, and the advice had fixed me with a partner in expatriation.

My first feeling, in greeting the "fast" man, was certainly that of deep disappointment and strong repugnance. But I was determined not to be too fastidious; and, having a lucky knack of suiting myself pretty well to all tempers, (without which a man had better not think of loadstones in the great Australasian Bight,) I contrived before the first week was out to establish so many points of connexion between us that we became the best friends in the world. Indeed, it would have been my fault if we had not, for Guy Bolding, with all his faults, was one of those excellent creatures who are nobody's enemies but their own. His good humour was inexhaustible. Not a hardship or privation came amiss to him. He had a phrase "Such fun!" that always rushed laughingly to his lips when another man would have cursed

and groaned. If we lost our way in the great trackless moors, missed our dinner, and were half-famished, Guy rubbed hands that would have felled an ox, and chuckled out "Such fun!" If we stuck in a bog, if we were caught in a thunder-storm, if we were pitched head over heels by the wild colts we undertook to break in, Guy Bolding's sole elegy was "Such fun!" That grand shibboleth of philosophy only forsook him at the sight of an open book. I don't think that, at that time, he could have found "fun" even in Don Quixote. This hilarious temperament had no insensibility; a kinder heart never beat,—but, to be sure, it beat to a strange, restless, tarantula sort of measure, which kept it in a perpetual dance. It made him one of those officiously good fellows, who are never quiet themselves, and never let any one else be quiet if they can help it. But Guy's great fault, in this prudent world, was his absolute incontinence of money. If you had turned an Euphrates of gold into his pockets at morning, it would have been as dry as the great Sahara by twelve at noon. What he did with the money was a mystery as much to himself as to every one else. His father said in a letter to me, that "he had seen him shying at sparrows with half-crowns!" That such a young man could come to no good in England, seemed perfectly clear. Still, it is recorded of many great men, who did not end their days in a

workhouse, that they were equally non-retentive of money. Schiller, when he had nothing else to give away, gave the clothes from his back, and Goldsmith the blankets from his bed. Tender hands found it necessary to pick Beethoven's pockets at home before he walked out. Great heroes, who have made no scruple of robbing the whole world, have been just as lavish as poor poets and musicians. Alexander, in parcelling out his spoils, left himself "hope!" And as for Julius Cæsar, he was two millions in debt when he shied his last half-crown at the sparrows in Gaul. Encouraged by these illustrious examples, I had hopes of Guy Bolding; and the more as he was so aware of his own infirmity that he was perfectly contented with the arrangement which made me treasurer of his capital, and even besought me, on no account, let him beg ever so hard, to permit his own money to come in his own way. In fact, I contrived to gain a great ascendency over his simple, generous, thoughtless nature; and by artful appeals to his affections—to all he owed to his father for many bootless sacrifices, and to the duty of providing a little dower for his infant sister, whose meditated portion had half gone to pay his college debts—I at last succeeded in fixing into his mind an object to save for.

Three other companions did I select for our Clerucchia. The first was the son of our old shepherd, who

had lately married, but was not yet encumbered with children,—a good shepherd, and an intelligent, steady fellow. The second was a very different character; he had been the dread of the whole squirearchy. A more bold and dexterous poacher did not exist. Now my acquaintance with this latter person, named Will Peterson, and more popularly "Will o' the Wisp," had commenced thus:—Bolt had managed to rear in a small copse about a mile from the house—and which was the only bit of ground in my uncle's domains that might by courtesy be called "a wood"—a young colony of pheasants, that he dignified by the title of a "preserve." This colony was audaciously despoiled and grievously depopulated, in spite of two watchers who, with Bolt, guarded for seven nights successively the slumbers of the infant settlement. So insolent was the assault, that bang, bang went the felonious gun—behind, before—within but a few yards of the sentinels—and the gunner was off, and the prey seized, before they could rush to the spot. The boldness and skill of the enemy soon proclaimed him, to the experienced watchers, to be Will o' the Wisp: and so great was their dread of this fellow's strength and courage, and so complete their despair of being a match for his swiftness and cunning, that after the seventh night the watchers refused to go out any longer; and poor Bolt himself was confined to his

bed by an attack of what a doctor would have called rheumatism, and a moralist, rage. My indignation and sympathy were greatly excited by this mortifying failure, and my interest romantically aroused by the anecdotes I had heard of Will o' the Wisp; accordingly, armed with a thick bludgeon, I stole out at night, and took my way to the copse. The leaves were not off the trees, and how the poacher contrived to see his victims I know not; but five shots did he fire, and not in vain, without allowing me to catch a glimpse of him. I then retreated to the outskirt of the copse, and waited patiently by an angle, which commanded two sides of the wood. Just as the dawn began to peep, I saw my man emerge within twenty yards of me. I held my breath, suffered him to get a few steps from the wood, crept on so as to intercept his retreat, and then pounce—such a bound! My hand was on his shoulder—prr, prr,—no eel was ever more lubricate. He slid from me like a thing immaterial, and was off over the moors with a swiftness which might well have baffled any clodhopper—a race whose calves are generally absorbed in the soles of their hobnail shoes. But the Hellenic Institute, with its classical gymnasia, had trained its pupils in all bodily exercises; and though the Will o' the Wisp was swift for a clodhopper, he was no match at running for any youth who has spent his boyhood in the discipline of

cricket, prisoner's bars, and hunt-the-hare. I reached him at length, and brought him to bay.

"Stand back!" said he, panting, and taking aim with his gun; "it is loaded."

"Yes," said I; "but though you're a brave poacher, you dare not fire at your fellow-man. Give up the gun this instant."

My address took him by surprise; he did not fire. I struck up the barrel, and closed on him. We grappled pretty tightly, and in the wrestle the gun went off. The man loosened his hold. "Lord ha' mercy! I have not hurt you?" he said falteringly.

"My good fellow—no," said I; "and now let us throw aside gun and bludgeon, and fight it out like Englishmen, or else let us sit down and talk it over like friends."

The Will o' the Wisp scratched its head and laughed.

"Well, you're a queer one!" quoth it. And the poacher dropped the gun and sat down.

We did talk it over, and I obtained Peterson's promise to respect the preserve henceforth; and we thereon grew so cordial that he walked home with me, and even presented me, shyly and apologetically, with the five pheasants he had shot. From that time I sought him out. He was a young fellow not four-and-twenty, who had taken to poaching from the wild

sport of the thing, and from some confused notions that he had a license from Nature to poach. I soon found out that he was meant for better things than to spend six months of the twelve in prison, and finish his life on the gallows after killing a gamekeeper. That seemed to me his most probable destiny in the Old World, so I talked him into a burning desire for the New one: and a most valuable aid in the Bush he proved too.

My third selection was in a personage who could bring little physical strength to help us, but who had more mind (though with a wrong twist in it) than all the others put together.

A worthy couple in the village had a son, who being slight and puny, compared to the Cumberland breed, was shouldered out of the market of agricultural labour, and went off, yet a boy, to a manufacturing town. Now about the age of thirty, this mechanic, disabled for his work by a long illness, came home to recover; and in a short time we heard of nothing but the pestilential doctrines with which he was either shocking or infecting our primitive villagers. According to report, Corcyra itself never engendered a democrat more awful. The poor man was really very ill, and his parents very poor; but his unfortunate doctrines dried up all the streams of charity that usually flowed through our kindly

hamlet. The clergyman (an excellent man, but of the old school) walked by the house as if it were tabooed. The apothecary said, "Miles Square ought to have wine;" but he did not send him any. The farmers held his name in execration, for he had incited all their labourers to strike for another shilling a-week. And but for the old tower, Miles Square would soon have found his way to the only republic in which he could obtain that democratic fraternisation for which he sighed—the grave being, I suspect, the sole commonwealth which attains that dead flat of social equality, that life in its every principle so heartily abhors.

My uncle went to see Miles Square, and came back the colour of purple. Miles Square had preached him a long sermon on the unholiness of war. "Even in defence of your king and country!" had roared the Captain; and Miles Square had replied with a remark upon kings in general, that the Captain could not have repeated without expecting to see the old tower fall about his ears; and with an observation about the country in particular, to the effect that "the country would be much better off if it *were* conquered!" On hearing the report of these loyal and patriotic replies, my father said, "Papæ!" and, roused out of his usual philosophical indifference, went himself to visit Miles Square. My father returned as

pale as my uncle had been purple. "And to think," said he mournfully, "that in the town whence this man comes, there are, he tells me, ten thousand other of God's creatures who speed the work of civilisation while execrating its laws!"

But neither father nor uncle made any opposition when, with a basket laden with wine and arrow-root, and a neat little Bible, bound in brown, my mother took her way to the excommunicated cottage. Her visit was as signal a failure as those that preceded it. Miles Square refused the basket; "he was not going to accept alms, and eat the bread of charity;" and on my mother meekly suggesting that, "if Mr Miles Square would condescend to look into the Bible, he would see that even charity was no sin in giver or recipient," Mr Miles Square had undertaken to prove "that, according to the Bible, he had as much a right to my mother's property as she had—that all things should be in common—and, when all things were in common, what became of charity? No; he could not eat my uncle's arrow-root, and drink his wine, while my uncle was improperly withholding from him and his fellow-creatures so many unprofitable acres: the land belonged to the people." It was now the turn of Pisistratus to go. He went once, and he went often. Miles Square and Pisistratus wrangled and argued—argued and wrangled—and ended by taking

a fancy to each other; for this poor Miles Square was not half so bad as his doctrines. His errors arose from intense sympathy with the sufferings he had witnessed, amidst the misery which accompanies the reign of *millocratism*, and from the vague aspirations of a half-taught, impassioned, earnest nature. By degrees, I persuaded him to drink the wine and eat the arrow-root, *en attendant* that millennium which was to restore the land to the people. And then my mother came again and softened his heart, and, for the first time in his life, let into its cold crotchets the warm light of human gratitude. I lent him some books, amongst others a few volumes on Australia. A passage in one of the latter, in which it was said "that an intelligent mechanic usually made his way in the colony, even as a shepherd, better than a dull agricultural labourer," caught hold of his fancy, and seduced his aspirations into a healthful direction. Finally, as he recovered, he entreated me to let him accompany me. And as I may not have to return to Miles Square, I think it right here to state, that he did go with me to Australia, and did succeed, first as a shepherd, next as a superintendant, and finally, on saving money, as a landowner; and that, in spite of his opinions on the unholiness of war, he was no sooner in possession of a comfortable log homestead, than he defended it with uncommon gallantry against

an attack of the aborigines, whose right to the soil was, to say the least of it, as good as his claim to my uncle's acres; that he commemorated his subsequent acquisition of a fresh allotment, with the stock on it, by a little pamphlet, published at Sydney, on the *Sanctity of the Rights of Property;* and that, when I left the colony, having been much pestered by two refractory "helps" that he had added to his establishment, he had just distinguished himself by a very anti-levelling lecture upon the duties of servants to their employers. What would the Old World have done for this man!

## CHAPTER V.

I HAD not been in haste to conclude my arrangements, for, independently of my wish to render myself acquainted with the small useful crafts that might be necessary to me in a life that makes the individual man a state in himself, I naturally desired to habituate my kindred to the idea of our separation, and to plan and provide for them all such substitutes or distractions, in compensation for my loss, as my fertile imagination could suggest. And first, for the sake of Blanche, Roland, and my mother, I talked the Captain into reluctant sanction of his sister-in-law's proposal, to unite their incomes and share alike, without considering which party brought the larger proportion into the firm. I represented to him that, unless he made that sacrifice of his pride, my mother would be wholly without those little notable uses and objects—those small household pleasures—so dear to woman; that all society in the neighbourhood would be impossible,

and that my mother's time would hang so heavily on her hands, that her only resource would be to muse on the absent one and fret. Nay, if he persisted in so false a pride, I told him, fairly, that I should urge my father to leave the tower. These representations succeeded; and hospitality had commenced in the old hall, and a knot of gossips had centred round my mother — groups of laughing children had relaxed the still brow of Blanche—and the Captain himself was a more cheerful and social man. My next point was to engage my father in the completion of the Great Book. "Ah, sir," said I, "give me an inducement to toil, a reward for my industry. Let me think, in each tempting pleasure, each costly vice—No, no; I will save for the Great Book! and the memory of the father shall still keep the son from error. Ah, look you, sir! Mr Trevanion offered me the loan of the £1500 necessary to commence with; but you generously and at once said—No; you must not begin life under the load of debt." And I knew you were right, and yielded—yielded the more gratefully, that I could not but forfeit something of the just pride of manhood in incurring such an obligation to the father of—Miss Trevanion. Therefore I have taken that sum from you—a sum that would almost have sufficed to establish your younger and worthier child in the world for ever. To that

child let me repay it, otherwise I will not take it. Let me hold it as a trust for the Great Book; and promise me that the Great Book shall be ready when your wanderer returns, and accounts for the missing talent."

And my father pished a little, and rubbed off the dew that had gathered on his spectacles. But I would not leave him in peace till he had given me his word that the Great Book should go on *à pas du géant* —nay, till I had seen him sit down to it with good heart, and the wheel went round again in the quiet mechanism of that gentle life.

Finally, and as the culminating acme of my diplomacy, I effected the purchase of the neighbouring apothecary's practice and good-will for Squills, upon terms which he willingly subscribed to; for the poor man had pined at the loss of his favourite patients, though, Heaven knows, they did not add much to his income. And as for my father, there was no man who diverted him more than Squills, though he accused him of being a materialist, and set his whole spiritual pack of sages to worry and bark at him, from Plato and Zeno to Reid and Abraham Tucker.

Thus, although I have very loosely intimated the flight of time, more than a whole year elapsed from the date of our settlement at the tower and that affixed for my departure.

In the meanwhile, despite the rarity amongst us of that phenomenon a newspaper, we were not so utterly cut off from the sounds of the far-booming world beyond, but what the intelligence of a change in the administration, and the appointment of Mr Trevanion to one of the great offices of state, reached our ears. I had kept up no correspondence with Trevanion subsequent to the letter that occasioned Guy Bolding's visit; I wrote now to congratulate him: his reply was short and hurried.

An intelligence that startled me more, and more deeply moved my heart, was conveyed to me some three months or so before my departure, by Trevanion's steward. The ill health of Lord Castleton had deferred his marriage, intended originally to be celebrated as soon as he arrived of age. He left the university with the honours of "a double-first class;" and his constitution appeared to rally from the effects of studies more severe to him than they might have been to a man of quicker and more brilliant capacities—when a feverish cold, caught at a county meeting, in which his first public appearance was so creditable as fully to justify the warmest hopes of his party, produced inflammation of the lungs, and ended fatally. The startling contrast forced on my mind—here sudden death, and cold clay—there youth in its first flower, princely rank, boundless wealth, the sanguine expecta-

tion of an illustrious career, and the prospect of that happiness which smiled from the eyes of Fanny—that contrast impressed me with a strange awe: death seems so near to us when it strikes those whom life most flatters and caresses. Whence is that curious sympathy that we all have with the possessors of worldly greatness, when the hour-glass is shaken and the scythe descends? If the famous meeting between Diogenes and Alexander had taken place, not before, but after the achievements which gave to Alexander the name of Great, the cynic would not perhaps have envied the hero his pleasures nor his splendours—neither the charms of Statira, nor the tiara of the Mede; but if, the day after, a cry had gone forth, "Alexander the Great is dead!" verily I believe that Diogenes would have coiled himself up in his tub, and felt that, with the shadow of the stately hero, something of glory and of warmth had gone from that sun, which it should darken never more. In the nature of man, the humblest or the hardest, there is a something that lives in all of the Beautiful or the Fortunate, which hope and desire have appropriated, even in the vanities of a childish dream.

## CHAPTER VI.

"WHY are you here all alone, cousin? How cold and still it is amongst the graves!"

"Sit down beside me, Blanche; it is not colder in the churchyard than on the village green."

And Blanche sat down beside me, nestled close to me, and leant her head upon my shoulder. We were both long silent. It was an evening in the early spring, clear and serene—the roseate streaks were fading gradually from the dark gray of long, narrow, fantastic clouds. Tall, leafless poplars, that stood in orderly level line, on the lowland between the churchyard and the hill, with its crown of ruins, left their sharp summits distinct against the sky. But the shadows coiled dull and heavy round the evergreens that skirted the churchyard, so that their outline was vague and confused; and there was a depth in their gloomy stillness, broken only when the thrush flew

out from the lower bushes, and the thick laurel-leaves stirred reluctantly, and again were rigid in repose. There is a certain melancholy in the evenings of early spring which is among those influences of nature the most universally recognised, the most difficult to explain. The silent stir of reviving life, which does not yet betray signs in the bud and blossom—only in a softer clearness in the air, a more lingering pause in the slowly lengthening day; a more delicate freshness and balm in the twilight atmosphere; a more lively yet still unquiet note from the birds, settling down into their coverts;—the vague sense under all that hush, which still outwardly wears the bleak sterility of winter—of the busy change, hourly, momently, at work—renewing the youth of the world, reclothing with vigorous bloom the skeletons of things—all these messages from the heart of nature to the heart of man may well affect and move us. But why with melancholy? No thought on our part connects and construes the low, gentle voices. It is not *thought* that replies and reasons: it is *feeling* that hears and dreams. Examine not, O child of man!—examine not that mysterious melancholy with the hard eyes of thy reason; thou canst not impale it on the spikes of thy thorny logic, nor describe its enchanted circle by problems conned from thy schools. Borderer thyself

of two worlds—the Dead and the Living—give thine ear to the tones, bow thy soul to the shadows, that steal, in the season of change, from the dim Border Land.

BLANCHE (*in a whisper.*)—What are you thinking of?—speak, pray!

PISISTRATUS.—I was not thinking, Blanche; or, if I were, the thought is gone at the mere effort to seize or detain it.

BLANCHE (*after a pause.*)—I know what you mean. It is the same with me often—so often, when I am sitting by myself, quite still. It is just like the story Primmins was telling us the other evening, "how there was a woman in her village who saw things and people in a piece of crystal, not bigger than my hand:* they passed along as large as life, but they were only pictures in the crystal." Since I heard the story, when aunt asks me what I am thinking of, I long to say, "I'm not thinking! I am seeing pictures in the crystal!"

* In primitive villages, in the west of England, the belief that the absent may be seen in a piece of crystal is, or was not many years ago, by no means an uncommon superstition. I have seen more than one of these magic mirrors, which Spenser, by the way, has beautifully described. They are about the size and shape of a swan's egg. It is not every one, however, who can be a crystal-seer; like second-sight, it is a special gift.

PISISTRATUS.—Tell my father *that*; it will please him. There is more philosophy in it than you are aware of, Blanche. There are wise men who have thought the whole world, its "pride, pomp, and circumstance," only a phantom image—a picture in the crystal.

BLANCHE.—And I shall see you—see us both, as we are sitting here—and that star which has just risen yonder—see it all in my crystal—when you are gone!—gone, cousin!" And Blanche's head drooped.

There was something so quiet and deep in the tenderness of this poor motherless child, that it did not affect one superficially, like a child's loud momentary affection, in which we know that the first toy will replace us. I kissed my little cousin's pale face, and said, "And I too, Blanche, have my crystal; and when I consult it, I shall be very angry if I see you sad and fretting, or seated alone. For you must know, Blanche, that that is all selfishness. God made us, not to indulge only in crystal pictures, weave idle fancies, pine alone, and mourn over what we cannot help—but to be alert and active—givers of happiness. Now, Blanche, see what a trust I am going to bequeath you. You are to supply my place to all whom I leave. You are to bring sunshine wherever you glide with

that shy, soft step—whether to your father, when you see his brows knit and his arms crossed, (that, indeed, you always do,) or to mine, when the volume drops from his hand—when he walks to and fro the room, restless, and murmuring to himself—then you are to steal up to him, put your hand in his, lead him back to his books, and whisper, 'What will Sisty say if his younger brother, the Great Book, is not grown up when he comes back?'—And my poor mother, Blanche! —ah, how can I counsel you there—how tell you where to find comfort for her? Only, Blanche, steal into her heart and be her daughter. And, to fulfil this threefold trust, you must not content yourself with seeing pictures in the crystal—do you understand me?"

"Oh yes," said Blanche, raising her eyes, while the tears rolled from them, and folding her arms resolutely on her breast.

"And so," said I, "as we two, sitting in this quiet burial-ground, take new heart for the duties and cares of life, so see, Blanche, how the stars come out, one by one, to smile upon us; for they, too, glorious orbs as they are, perform their appointed tasks. Things seem to approximate to God in proportion to their vitality and movement. Of all things, least inert and sullen should be the soul of man. How